Phaedrus

DRAMATIS PERSONAE: SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS

227a SOCRATES: Phaedrus[1] my friend! Where to? And from where?
PHAEDRUS: From Lysias, Cephalus's son,[2] Socrates, and I am going for a walk around outside the wall; for I spent a long time there, sitting around since early morning. In obedience[3] to your comrade and mine, Acumenus,[4] I take walks along the roads; for he says they are
227b more invigorating than those in colonnades.
SOC.: What he says, comrade, is fine. But then Lysias was in town, it would appear?
PHAE.: Yes, at Epicrates', in that house there, of Morychus's,[5] near the Olympian's temple.

1. Phaedrus appears in two other Platonic dialogues. He is the first speaker in the *Symposium*, and indeed, together with Eryximachus, the proximate cause of the whole evening's theme of speeches on erotic love. With Eryximachus and Andron son of Androtion (see *Gorgias* 487c), he appears among those listening to the Sophist Hippias in the *Protagoras*. Little else is known of the historical Phaedrus. The dramatic date of the *Symposium* is 416, of the *Protagoras* about 432. Lysias returned to Athens in 412–411 (at which time Isocrates would have been twenty-four years old); probably we should think of this dialogue as occurring about then.
2. The conversation presented in the *Republic* takes place at Cephalus's house in the Piraeus, the port belonging to Athens and connected to the central city by the long walls. His two sons were Polemarchus and Lysias, the famous Attic rhetor, some thirty of whose speeches have been preserved. Both are present in the *Republic*, but of the two, only Polemarchus speaks.
3. The passive participle of *peithein*, to persuade, conveys the idea "being persuaded by" or "obeying."
4. Acumenus, a doctor, is the father of Eryximachus, also a doctor.
5. Morychus was something of a byword in comedies (e.g., Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 887) for his luxurious living.

SOC.: So what, then, was the pastime? Or is it clear that Lysias was feasting you with speeches?[6]

PHAE.: You will learn, if you have the leisure to listen as you walk on.

SOC.: What then? Do you not suppose that I would deem it, with Pindar, a "more important affair than business"[7] to hear what your and Lysias's pastime was?

227c PHAE.: Go ahead, then!

SOC.: You may speak.

PHAE.: And indeed, Socrates, the hearing is befitting for you at least; for actually the speech that we were passing our time on was, in I know not what way, erotic.[8] For Lysias has written about an attempt being made on one of the beautiful ones;[9] but not by a lover—indeed this very thing is what he has put with subtle refinement. For he says that one must gratify the nonlover rather than the lover.

SOC.: Nobly born man! Would that he had written that one must do it for the poor man rather than the rich, and for the older rather than

227d the younger, and whatever other things pertain to me and to most of us! Then indeed the speeches would be urbane and beneficial to the people. As it is, I for one have conceived such a desire to hear, that if you proceeded to take your walk to Megara[10] and, following Herodicus,[11] you advanced to the wall and went back again, I would not get left behind you.

PHAE.: What are you saying, Socrates, you best of men? Do you sup-

6. Note the similar suggestion (that speeches are feasts) at the beginning of the *Gorgias*.

7. The quotation is from *Isthmian* 1. The poet declares his intention to interrupt his business of writing a poem in honor of the island of Delos, sacred to Apollo, in order to perform his patriotic duty of celebrating a local winner of the Isthmian Games. He begins: "My mother, Thebes of the golden shield, I shall make your affair more important even than business." The word translated "business" is *ascholia*, "lack of leisure" (used also in *Gorgias* 458c)

8. Socrates, though usually proclaiming his lack of knowledge, sometimes claims expertise regarding *erōs*, perhaps most notably at *Symposium* 177d–e. I have translated *erōs* and related words with "love" and related words; but "love" must also be used sometimes for words with the root *phil-*, like "love of wisdom" for *philosophia*. I have indicated such cases in the notes.

9. *Kalos* means "beautiful," "noble," "fine." I have used all three translations according to context. I have translated *gennaios* "nobly born" to preserve its etymological connection with birth, generation, descent.

10. Megara, adjacent to Attica and allied with Sparta, figured prominently in events leading to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.

11. Not Gorgias's brother, but according to Plato's Protagoras (*Protagoras* 316d–e) a contemporary Sophist from Megara who hid his wisdom under the guise of the art of gymnastic or physical training. In the *Republic* 406a–b he is blamed for too sophisticated a medicine combined with gymnastic that excessively prolongs life in sickness.

228a pose that what Lysias, the most terribly clever at writing of the men of today, has composed at leisure over much time, I, a mere layman,[12] shall recollect in a manner worthy of him? Far from it. And yet I should wish for this rather than that much gold should become mine.

SOC. Phaedrus, if I fail to know my Phaedrus, I shall forget even myself. But neither of these is the case. Well do I know that, when that man heard Lysias's speech, he didn't hear it only once but often or-

228b dered him repeatedly to speak, and he obeyed eagerly. And even these things were not sufficient for him, but he ended up getting hold of the book[13] and looked over those things which he most desired; and sitting around doing this since early morning, he tired of it and went for a walk—knowing the speech by heart, as I think, by the dog,[14] unless it is quite long indeed. And he proceeded outside the wall so as to practice. Encountering the one who is sick[15] over hearing speeches, he saw—yes, he saw—and was pleased that he should

228c have the fellow Corybantic reveler,[16] and he ordered him to go ahead. And when the lover of speeches begged him to speak, he played hard to get as if not desiring to speak. But he was going to end up speaking—even by force, if someone would not willingly listen. So then, Phaedrus, beg him to do right now what he will do presently at all events.

PHAE.: Truly the strongest thing by far for me is to speak in whatever way I can, since you seem to me someone who will not at all let me go before I speak in some way or other.

SOC.: Quite truly indeed do I seem so to you!

228d PHAE.: So that's what I'll do. For really, Socrates, it's above all that I have not thoroughly learned the words; but the thought of nearly all the respects in which he said that the things pertaining to the lover differ from those pertaining to the nonlover—I shall go through the chief points of each in succession, beginning with the first.

SOC.: When you've first shown, friend,[17] what it is that you have in

12. *Idiotēs:* a private man, layman, amateur, as compared to a (public) expert or professional.

13. Or one could translate "scroll," which makes Socrates' remark at 228d more pointed.

14. At *Gorgias* 482b, Socrates indicates that this odd oath refers to an Egyptian god.

15. The metaphor of sickness for overpowering erotic desire is used often in what follows. So too at *Symposium* 207a–b, Diotima links being sick and being erotically disposed.

16. A Corybant is a dancer in an ecstatic mystery rite. Socrates makes a remarkable comparison of his own hearing of certain arguments to Corybantes' hearing of flutes, at *Crito* 54d.

17. More literally, "friendship." Socrates addresses Phaedrus here with the abstract noun.

your left hand under your cloak; for I am guessing that you have the speech itself. And if this is so, think about me in this way: that while
228e I love[18] you by all means, when Lysias too is present, it has not seemed best[19] at all to provide myself for you to practice on. But come, show!
PHAE.: Stop! You have driven me away from the hope I had that I should do my gymnastic exercise on you. But where do you wish us to sit down and read?
229a SOC.: Let us turn aside right there and go along the Ilissus, and then we shall sit down in a quiet spot wherever it seems good.
PHAE.: Good timing, it seems, that I happened to be barefoot; you, of course, always are. So it's very easy for us to go along the little brook, getting our feet wet—and not unpleasant, especially at this season of the year and hour of the day.
SOC.: Go ahead now, and at the same time look for where we shall sit down.
PHAE.: Now, do you see that very tall plane tree?[20]
SOC.: Yes. Well?
229b PHAE.: There is shade there, and a measured breeze, and grass to sit on or, if we should wish, to lie down on.
SOC.: You may go ahead.
PHAE.: Tell me, Socrates, is it not from somewhere here along the Ilissus that Boreas is said to have snatched away Oreithyia?[21]
SOC.: He is said to have.
PHAE.: Well now, isn't it right here? Certainly the waters appear graceful, pure, and clear, and suitable for maidens to play beside them.
229c SOC.: No; but some four or six hundred yards[22] farther down, where we cross over toward the shrine in Agra. And a certain altar of Boreas is there at that spot.
PHAE.: I've never quite noticed. But tell me, by Zeus, Socrates: are you persuaded that this mythical speech is true?

18. Here Socrates uses the verb *philein*, related to *philos* (friend), not the verb *eran*. See first note at 227c and *Gorgias* 513c and second note there.
19. This phrase is also used to speak of official decrees of the assembly. One could translate, "It has not at all been decreed." See *Gorgias* 466c and note there.
20. Given the Greek penchant for wordplay, it may be worth noting that "plane tree" translates *platanos*.
21. Boreas is the North Wind. Oreithyia was daughter to Erechtheus, a mythical king of Athens.
22. Literally, two or three *stadia*. Agra is a *deme* or political subdivision of Attica. Herodotus 7.189 relates that the shrine to Boreas was built on the Ilissus after the North Wind destroyed the Persian fleet, in response to prayers by the Athenians to Boreas and Oreithyia.

SOC.: Well if, like the wise, I distrusted it, I would not be out of place.[23] In that case, playing the sophist I would assert that Boreas's wind hurled her down from the nearby rocks where she was playing with Pharmaceia, and thus she ended up said to have been snatched
229d up by Boreas—or else from the Areopagus;[24] for this account in turn is also told, that she was snatched away from there, not from here. But I, Phaedrus, consider such things in other respects graceful, but belonging to a man who is too terribly clever, laborious, and not altogether fortunate, if only because it is necessary for him after this to straighten out the form of the Hippocentaurs, and next that of the Chimera; and then in will stream a mob of such Gorgons and Pega-
229e suses and multitudes of other inconceivable things and bizarre curiosities of certain natures of which marvels are told.[25] If someone, distrusting these, will make each thing approach near to what's likely, as if using a certain rude wisdom, he will stand in need of much leisure. But I do not at all have leisure for these things; and the cause of it, my friend, is this. I am not yet able, according to the Delphic inscription, to know myself;[26] it appears to me laughable indeed
230a for one who is still ignorant of this to examine alien things. Wherefore, bidding farewell[27] to these things and being persuaded by what is conventionally believed about them, as I was saying just now I examine not them but myself, whether I happen to be some wild animal more multiply twisted and filled with desire than Typhon,[28] or

23. *Atopos*, literally out of place or without a place; elsewhere I have sometimes translated it "strange" or "bizarre."

24. The Areopagus, or "hill of Ares (the god of war)," was a small hill on which sat the council and court of elders.

25. A Hippocentaur has the head, torso, and arms of a man joined to a horse's body. The Chimera combined the forms of lion, goat, and dragon. The Gorgons were three women with snakes in place of hair. Pegasus was a winged horse that sprang up either from the blood of Medusa (the most famous of the Gorgons) or from the stump of her neck after she was decapitated by Perseus. The hero Bellerophon rode on Pegasus in order to kill the Chimera.

26. This inscription (*gramma*) "Know thyself!" was, along with "Nothing too much," perhaps the best known at Delphi.

27. The Greek uses the verb *chairein*, connected to words translated "gratify" and "graceful" previously. See *Gorgias* 505d and 505c and notes there.

28. This giant, perhaps the most frightening monster found in Greek myths, had enormous strength and the head of a dragon and of one hundred snakes, all flashing fire; he was the last child of Earth, born after Zeus had overthrown the Titans and established his rule. Zeus had to defeat him and cast him underground to secure his own rule and the present order as we know it. (Hesiod, *Theogony* 820–85; Homer *Iliad* 2.782). The word *atuphos*, translated "without arrogance" at the end of the sentence, is cognate with the name for this giant. De Vries identifies this as "the first appearance of the etymological fancy which is rife in the *Phaedrus*."

a gentler and simpler animal, having by nature a share in a certain lot that is divine and without arrogance. But comrade, amidst the speeches—wasn't this the tree to which you were leading us?

230b PHAE.: Yes indeed, this is the one.

SOC.: By Hera,[29] the resting place is beautiful, to be sure! This plane tree is especially wide-spreading and tall, and the height and shade of the willow are altogether beautiful, and as its flowering is reaching its peak, it makes the place as sweet smelling as can be; and in addition the stream flows most gracefully under the plane tree with especially cool water, by the testimony of my foot. It seems likely, from the maidens and other statues, to be the shrine of certain nymphs

230c and of Achelous.[30] And further, if you wish, how lovely and particularly sweet is the fragrant good breeze of the place! It responds with a summery and clear echo to the chorus of cicadas. And the most subtle refinement of all is the grass, because it is naturally sufficient, on a gentle slope, for someone laying down his head to be in an altogether beautiful situation. So that your work of guiding strangers, Phaedrus my friend, has been the best.

PHAE.: But you, you amazing man, appear to be someone very much out of place! For as you say, you absolutely seem like some stranger

230d on a guided tour and not one of the country. To such an extent do you not go away from home, neither out of the town nor beyond the boundaries, and it seems to me you don't go outside the wall at all.

SOC.: Forgive me, best of men. For I am a lover of learning.[31] Now then, the country places and the trees are not willing to teach me anything, but the human beings in town are. But you in my opinion have found the drug for my trip out. For just as they lead hungry animals by holding out and shaking a young shoot or some fruit, so you,

230e stretching out in front of me speeches in books, will evidently lead me around all of Attica[32] and anywhere else you wish. So now then, having arrived right here at present, it seems good to me to lie down; and you, in whatever posture you consider easiest to read, assume it and read.

29. Hera, wife of Zeus, appears to be invoked in oaths most often by women.

30. Nymphs were various deities or spirits of streams, mountains, groves, and the like; Achelous was the oldest river god.

31. *Philomathēs*.

32. Attica is the territory of Greece consolidated under the political community of Athens.

PHAE.: Listen then!

You know about my affairs, and you have heard what, these things having come to be, I believe to be advantageous for us. And I deem
231a it fitting to be spared the misfortune of not getting what I ask for on this account, that I do not happen to be in love with you.[33] For those people, when they have ceased from desire, repent the benefactions they have conferred; but for these there is no time in which it is to be expected that they should have second thoughts. For they confer benefactions in proportion to their own power, not from necessity but voluntarily, as they have best taken counsel regarding their own concerns. Furthermore, lovers examine both those of their affairs that have been badly managed on account of love and the benefactions they have conferred, and adding to the account the toils they have
231b had, they consider they have long ago paid back to the beloveds the favor in its worth. But nonlovers cannot on this account allege as a pretext the neglect of their own concerns, nor calculate past toils, nor blame differences with relatives on this; so that, with such great evils stripped away, nothing remains but eagerly to do whatever they think will provide gratification when they have done it. Furthermore,
231c if it is worthwhile to make much of lovers on this account, that they claim they are most friendly[34] to the ones they love and are ready, in their speeches and in their deeds, to incur the hatred of others in gratifying the beloveds, it is quite easy to know, if they speak the truth, that they will make more of those with whom they fall in love later than of these, and it is clear that, if it seems good to those, they will treat these badly. And further, how is it reasonable to give over an af-
231d fair of this sort to someone having a misfortune such as this, which no one of experience would even attempt to turn aside? For even they themselves agree that they are sick rather than of sound mind,[35] and know that they are thinking badly but have not power to master themselves. So how, then, when they are thinking well again, could they consider those things to be in fine shape, concerning which they

33. More literally, "to be a lover of you."
34. Here "to be friendly" translates the verb *philein*, for which one might choose "to love"; but I am using this latter for *eran*.
35. The word *sophrōnein* has a broad range of meanings, from "think soundly" to "be of sound mind" or "be moderate." See *Gorgias* 489e and 507a and notes there.

take counsel when thus affected? In addition, if you should choose the best one from the lovers, your selection would be from few; but if you should choose the most suitable one for yourself from the others,
231e the selection would be from many, so that there is much greater hope that one worthy of your friendship happens to be among the many.

But if you're afraid of the established law,[36] lest reproach befall you
232a when human beings hear of it, it is likely that lovers, thinking they should be held worthy of emulation by others too, just as they are by themselves, would be excited to speak and in their love of honor[37] would display before all that they have not toiled in vain; but nonlovers, being masters of themselves,[38] choose what is best instead of reputation among human beings. Furthermore, many must of necessity hear of and see the lovers following after the beloveds and mak-
232b ing this their business, so that whenever they behold them conversing with each other, they suppose them then to be associated in the desire that has come to pass or that is about to be; but they don't even try to attribute blame to nonlovers on account of the association, knowing that it's necessary to converse with someone either for friendship or for some other pleasure. In addition, if fear presents itself as you think how it's hard for friendship to endure and that when a disagreement
232c has arisen in any other way the misfortune is common to both, but when you have given over what you make very much of, great harm befalls you—then you should in all probability fear the lovers more. For many are the things that pain them, and they believe that all things that happen tend to their own harm. Therefore they even prevent the beloveds' associations with others, fearing that some who have acquired property may surpass them in possessions, that others who have gained education may prove to be stronger in intelligence;
232d and they guard against the power of each one of those who have acquired some other good thing. So when they have persuaded you to be hated by these, they set you down in a solitude bereft of friends; but if, looking out for your own, you have a better thought than they, you will come into a disagreement with them. Those, however, who

36. The word *nomos* means law; custom; established institution, practice, or opinion. See *Gorgias* 482e and note there. Here one should probably take it in the sense of unwritten law or custom.

37. *Philotimoumenous:* another "*phil-* word" whose translation includes "love."

38. More literally, "being stronger than themselves." See *Gorgias* 482b and 488d and notes there.

happened not to be lovers but achieved through virtue what they asked for, would not be jealous of those who associate with you but would hate those who do not want to, supposing that they are despised by those, but benefited by your associates. So that there is
232e much greater hope that friendship rather than enmity will come to pass for them from the affair.

In addition, many of the lovers desire the body before they come to know the character and gain experience of the other personal traits, so that it's unclear to them whether they will still wish to be friends then,
233a when they have ceased from desire. But as for the nonlovers, who were friends with each other even before they did these things, it is not likely that these things, through which they received benefit, should diminish friendship with them; but these things are left behind as reminders of those that are going to be. In addition, it is to be expected that you would become better by being persuaded by me rather than by a lover. For those people praise the sayings and the doings[39] even contrary to what's best, in some cases fearing lest they be hated, in
233b other cases because their own knowledge is worse on account of desire. For love displays effects of the following sort: when they are unfortunate, it makes them believe that things that cause no pain to others are grievously distressing; when they are fortunate, it compels even things not worthy of pleasure to meet with praise from them. So that it is much more fitting for the beloveds to pity than to emulate them. But if you are persuaded by me, first, in my association with you
233c I shall attend not to present pleasure, but also to the benefit that lies in store for the future; I'll not be worsted by love, but in mastery of myself; and I shall not on account of small things take upon myself strong enmity, but on account of great ones shall slowly feel slight anger, forgiving involuntary things while trying to turn aside voluntary ones: these are testimonies of a friendship that will exist for a long time. Now if this thought presents itself to you, that strong friendship cannot come into being unless someone happens to be in love, you must
233d ponder in your heart that we would not make much of sons, nor of fathers and mothers, nor would we have acquired trusty friends, who have become such not from desire of that sort but from other practices.

Furthermore, if one must most gratify those who are most in need,[40]

39. That is, of the beloved.
40. Or "who ask (for it) the most."

it would be fitting in other respects too to confer benefits not on the best but on those most lacking resources; for, released from the greatest evils, they will acknowledge the most gratitude to them. Yes in-
233e deed, and in private feasts it's worthwhile to invite not friends but beggars and those needing replenishment; for they will appreciate and follow after and come to one's doors, and will be most pleased and will acknowledge by no means the least gratitude and will pray for many good things for one. But perhaps it is fitting to gratify not those most acutely in need,[41] but those most capable of returning the
234a favor; and not only those who are in love,[42] but those worthy of the affair; and not those who will enjoy your youthful beauty, but such as will give a share in their good things to you as you become older; and not those who, having accomplished it, will take pride[43] in it before others, but such as, with a sense of shame, will keep silence before all; and not those who pay serious attention for a short time, but those who will be friends equally through the whole of life; and not those who, ceasing from desire, will seek a pretext for enmity, but those
234b who, when the bloom of youth is passed, will then display their own virtue. Remember, then, the things that have been said and ponder this in your heart, that the friends of lovers admonish them on the grounds that the practice is a bad one; but no one of their kin has ever yet blamed nonlovers on this account for deliberating badly concerning themselves.

Perhaps then you might ask me whether I am recommending that you gratify all the nonlovers. Now, I suppose that neither would the
234c lover bid you to have this intention toward all the lovers. For, neither for him who gets it would it be worthy of equal gratitude, nor for you who wish to escape the others' notice would it be possible in like manner. Indeed, no harm must come about from this, but benefit for both. Now then, I believe the things I've said are sufficient; but if you long for something that you consider to have been left out, ask!

How does the speech appear to you, Socrates? Hasn't it been stated extraordinarily[44]—both in other respects and especially in its diction?

41. Or "those who ask most vehemently."
42. J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, Oxford Classical Texts, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901) accepts Ast's conjecture instead: "those who beg."
43. *Philotimeisthai:* see first note at 232a.
44. *Huperphuos:* it is worth noting the root *phu-* (growth, nature) in this word; one might capture that connection by translating "preternaturally."

234d SOC.: Indeed, demonically, comrade, so that I'm struck senseless! And I suffered this on account of you, Phaedrus, as I looked off upon you, in that you seemed to me, in the midst of reading, to brighten[45] under the influence of the speech; for, supposing you more than me to understand about such things, I followed you, and following I joined in Dionysiac revelry[46] with you, divine head.[47]

PHAE.: Let it be. So this, then, is how it seems good to play around?

SOC.: Why, do I seem to you to be playing around and not to have been serious?

234e PHAE.: No, no, Socrates. But by Zeus the god of Friendship, tell me truly: do you think any other of the Greeks could say different things, greater and more profuse than these, about the same affair?

SOC.: What then? Must the speech be praised by me and you not only because each of the words are clear, compact, and precisely turned on the lathe, but also on the grounds that its maker has said the needful things? For if it must be, I must yield for your sake, since it surely es-

235a caped my notice, because of my nothingness; for I applied my mind to its rhetorical aspect alone, and I didn't think that even Lysias himself thought this to be sufficient. In fact, Phaedrus, unless you say otherwise, he seemed to me to have said the same things two or three times, as if not altogether well provided with resources to say many things about the same subject, or perhaps as if he had no concern for such a subject; and certainly he appeared to me to act like a youth, showing off his ability to say it very well in both ways, saying the same things first one way and then another.

235b PHAE.: What you say is nothing, Socrates. For this very thing is what the speech most of all has got. For of the things inherent in the affair that are worth stating, it has left out nothing. So that besides the things said by that man, no one could ever say other things more profuse and worth more.

SOC.: On this I shall no longer be able to be persuaded by you. For ancient and wise men and women who have spoken and written about these things will refute me, if I yield to gratify you.

45. De Vries points out the play upon Phaedrus's name (*phaidros*, meaning bright, beaming, joyous).

46. A more general verb here echoes the more specific Corybantic revelry of 228b–c.

47. This phrase "divine (*theios*) head" should perhaps remind us of Achilles' addressing the ghost of Patroclus as "honored (*ētheiē*) head" at *Iliad* 23.94. When Socrates addresses Phaedrus "dear head" at 264a, he repeats, as De Vries notes, the Homeric phrase "Teucer, dear head" (*Iliad* 8.281), spoken by Agamemnon to Telamon's bastard son (and half brother of Ajax).

235c PHAE.: Who are these people? And where have you heard things better than these?

SOC.: Well, I cannot say now, just like that; but it's clear that I have heard from some people, either from the beautiful Sappho, maybe, or the wise Anacreon,[48] or perhaps from some writers. Now, judging from what do I say this? With my breast somehow full, demonic one, I feel that I could say, besides these things, others that are not worse. Now then, I know well, being conscious of my own lack of learning, that I have thought of none of these things by myself. It remains then,
235d I suppose, that I have been filled like a jar through hearing from alien sources somewhere. And again from dullness I have forgotten this very thing too: how and from whom I heard them.

PHAE.: Yes indeed, most nobly born man, what you have said is very fine. And I shall not bid you to tell me from whom and how you heard. But do this very thing you are saying: you have promised to say other better and no less profuse things than those in the book, abstaining from them; and to you I promise, just like the nine archons,
235e to set up in Delphi a golden image of equal measure,[49] not of myself only but also of you.

SOC.: You are most dear[50] and truly golden, Phaedrus, if you suppose I am saying that Lysias has missed the mark in every way and that I can really say things different from all these. This, I think, not even the paltriest writer would suffer. For example, take what the speech was about: who, do you suppose, saying that one must gratify the
236a nonlover rather than the lover, would pass over lauding the one's prudence and blaming the other's folly, these being necessary in any case, and then would have some different things to say? Rather, I suppose that such things must be allowed and pardoned the speaker. And of such things it is not the discovery but the arrangement that is to be praised; of things that are not necessary but are difficult to find, in addition to the arrangement, the discovery as well.

PHAE.: I concede what you're saying; for in my opinion you have spo-

48. Sappho, born on the island of Lesbos about 140 years before Socrates, wrote mostly lyric poetry, especially on topics relating to love. Anacreon, likewise a lyric poet, was born about forty years later than she.

49. The archons in Athens took an oath to set up a statue of gold if they transgressed the law. "Of equal measure" translates *isometrēton*, which probably means life-size, but could mean of equal weight.

50. The word is the superlative of *philos*, "friend, friendly" (active sense) or "dear, loved" (passive sense).

ken in a measured manner. So then I too will act in this way: I shall
236b grant you to set down the lover's being more sick than the nonlover, and you, having said of the remaining matters other things more profuse and worth more than those, you shall be set up wrought with the hammer at Delphi, next to the Cypselids' votive offering.[51]

SOC.: Have you taken serious offense, Phaedrus, because in joshing you I attacked your boyfriend, and do you really suppose that I shall attempt to say something different and more multicolorful, to put beside that one's wisdom?

236c PHAE.: As to this, my friend, you've got into the same sort of wrestling holds. Now more than anything you must speak in whatever way you can; but beware that we're not forced to do the tiresome business of the comedians, answering back to each other, and don't wish to force me to say that well-known "If, Socrates, I fail to know my Socrates, I shall forget even myself," and "He desired to speak, but played hard to get." But think it over that we shall not go away from here until you speak the things you said you have in your breast. We
236d two are alone in solitude, I am stronger and younger, and from all these things "understand what I say to you,"[52] and don't in any way wish to speak in consequence of violence rather than willingly.

SOC.: But, blessed Phaedrus, I shall be laughable, a layman speaking offhand about the same things, compared with a good writer.[53]

PHAE.: Do you know how things stand? Stop playing coy[54] with me! For I have something to say by which I'll more or less compel you to speak.

SOC.: Then don't say it at all!

PHAE.: But yes! I am saying it right now, and my speech will be an oath.[55] For I swear to you—by which one, then, by which of the
236e gods? Or do you wish by this plane tree here?—yea verily, if you do not say the speech to me opposite this very tree, never again shall I either display or report to you any other speech of anyone.

51. Knowledge of that offering is not available. B. Schweitzer's *Platon und die bildende Kunst der Griechen* (1953), cited by De Vries, suggests that a golden statue of Zeus stood nearby; Phaedrus thus escalates the prize from a statue of Socrates next to one of himself to a statue of Socrates next to Zeus.

52. The words are quoted from Pindar (frag. 94 Bowra, 105 Snell, 121 Turyn), quoted too at *Meno* 76d.

53. The word *poiētēs*, here rendered "writer," was translated more literally "maker" at 234e6; it can also mean "poet."

54. *Kallōpizō*: more literally, "beautify the face."

55. A reminiscence of Achilles' angry speech to Agamemnon in Homer's *Iliad* 1.239.

SOC.: Oh my, foul wretch! How well you have found out the necessity for the man who is a lover of speeches[56] to do what you bid!
PHAE.: So then what's with your twisting and turning?
SOC.: Nothing more, now that you have sworn these things. For how should I be able to abstain from such a banquet?
237a PHAE.: Then speak!
SOC.: Well, do you know how I'll do it?
PHAE.: In what respect?
SOC.: I shall veil myself to speak, so that I may run through the speech as quickly as possible and may not be at a complete loss from a sense of shame as I look toward you.
PHAE.: Just speak, and in other respects do as you wish!
SOC.: Come then, Muses, whether you are named clear-toned[57] on account of the form[58] of your song or you have this surname on account of the musical race of the Ligurians, "Take part with me" in the tale, which this best of men here forces me to speak, so that his comrade,
237b who even earlier seemed to him to be wise, now will seem yet more so.

Once upon a time there was a very beautiful boy, or rather youth, who had a great many lovers. A certain one of them was wily and, while no less in love than anyone, had persuaded the boy that he did not love him. And then came a time when, in making his demand, he was persuading him of this very thing, that he ought to gratify the nonlover in preference to the lover, and he spoke as follows:

Concerning everything, my boy, there is one ruling principle[59] for
237c those who are to deliberate finely. One must know that which the deliberation is about, or else one necessarily misses the mark altogether. But it escapes the notice of the many that they do not know the being of each thing. And so, on the grounds that they know, they do not work out an agreement in the beginning of the investigation, but by going on ahead they pay back what's likely—for they agree neither with themselves nor with each other. So let us, you and me,

56. *Philologos.*
57. Greek *ligeiai.*
58. *Eidos,* "form," and *idea,* which I simply transliterate "*idea*," both arise from the root that denotes seeing. See *Gorgias* 454e and note there.
59. The word *archē,* here translated "ruling principle," can mean simply "beginning" and also "rule."

not suffer what we censure in others. But since the argument lies before you and me as to whether one should enter into friendship rather with lover or with nonlover, having by agreement set down a
237d definition concerning love, as to what kind of thing it is and what power it has, let us look off to and refer to this as we make our investigation into whether it provides benefit or harm. Now then, that love is a certain desire is clear to everyone; and further, that nonlovers too desire beautiful things, we know. By what, then, shall we separate the lover and the nonlover? We must further observe that in each of us there are some two ruling and leading *ideas*, which we follow wherever they lead: the desire of pleasures that is naturally planted in us, and another acquired opinion that aims at the best.
237e These two things in us sometimes are of one mind, but sometimes they engage in factious struggle; and at one time the one, at another time the other, wins mastery. Now then, when opinion leads with reason toward the best and wins mastery, the name of the mastery is
238a *moderation;* but when desire without reason drags us toward pleasures and rules in us, the name *wanton outrage*[60] is applied to the rule. Wanton outrage, now, has many names—for it has many limbs and many forms[61]—and whichever of these *ideas* happens to become conspicuous causes the one who has it to be named by its own name, some name neither beautiful nor very worthy to have acquired. For when desire concerning food wins mastery over the reasoned ac-
238b count of what's best and the other desires, it is called mad gluttony and causes him who has it to be called this same thing. And again, when desire concerning strong drink tyrannizes, leading him who has acquired it in this direction, it is clear what epithet he will meet with. And as for the other names that are brothers of these, and names of brother desires, each time one rules as potentate, it's clear in advance how it is fitting to be called. On what account all the foregoing things have been said is already nearly evident, but what is stated is altogether clearer than what is unstated.[62] So then, the desire without reason which masters the opinion striving toward
238c what's correct and is led toward the pleasure of beauty, and which,

60. The Greek *hubris* covers a wide range of meanings: arrogance, violence, outrage, wantonness, lust, insolence, lewdness.

61. Another manuscript reads "many parts" instead of "many forms."

62. Several manuscripts read *pan pōs* instead of *pantōs:* "every thing that is said is somehow clearer than what is not said" (perhaps a proverbial saying).

in turn mightily gaining strength from desires that are akin to itself toward the beauty of bodies, conquers in its leading, taking its name from this very might, is called *love*.[63]

But Phaedrus, my friend, do I seem to you, as to myself, to have suffered some divine experience?

PHAE.: Absolutely, Socrates; contrary to custom a certain good fluency has possessed you.

238d SOC.: Hear me, then, in silence. For really the place is like to be divine; so that if as the speech proceeds I should perchance become possessed by nymphs, don't wonder. For the things I am now giving voice to are no longer far from dithyrambs.

PHAE.: What you're saying is very true.

SOC.: And really, you are the cause of these things. But hear the remaining things; and perhaps, then, what is coming upon me may be turned away. These things, then, will be a concern for god; as for us, we must go back in speech to the boy.

So be it, most brave one.[64] What it happens to be that we must deliberate about, has been stated and defined. Looking toward it, as re-

238e gards what remains let us say what benefit or harm from lover and from nonlover will likely come to pass for him who gratifies. Now, one ruled by desire and a slave to pleasure must necessarily, I suppose, make preparations for the beloved to be as pleasant as possible for himself; and to the sick person everything that does not resist is

239a pleasant, while what is stronger[65] or equal is hateful. The lover will not willingly bear with either a stronger or an equal boyfriend, but always works to make him weaker and more deficient. Now, unlearned is weaker than wise, cowardly than courageous, incapable of speaking than rhetorical, slow than of ready wit. When so many and still more evils, as far as intellectual capacity goes, come into being and by nature exist in the beloved, the lover must necessarily be pleased by the ones and prepare to bring about the others, or else be

63. This definition of love, *erōs*, includes much wordplay involving the sound *rho* in the words for strength, might, etc.

64. De Vries notes that this epic term, used also twice in tragedy, may well convey an element of parody.

65. *Kreittōn* and *hēttōn*, in this passage rendered "stronger" and "weaker," also have the more general sense of "better" and "worse" or "superior" and "inferior." See *Gorgias*, note at 482b.

deprived of what is immediately pleasant. And he must necessarily
239b be jealous, and by keeping him away from many associations, especially beneficial ones from which he might become a real man,[66] he must necessarily be the cause of great harm—of the greatest harm by keeping him from the association from which he might be most intelligent.[67] And this happens to be divine philosophy, which the lover must keep his boyfriend far away from, since he's terribly afraid of being despised; and he must devise the other things so that the beloved will be ignorant of everything and in everything look toward the lover, and as such the beloved would be most pleasant to him,
239c but most harmful to himself. So then, concerning what pertains to intellectual capacity, the man in love is in no way profitable as trustee and partner.

After these things we must look at the body's condition and treatment: What sort is it, and how will he give treatment to the one he's gained authority over—he who has been compelled to pursue pleasant instead of good? He'll be seen pursuing someone soft and not solid, reared not in pure sunlight but under mixed shade, inexperienced in manly toils and hard sweat but experienced in a delicate
239d and unmanly way of life, adorned with alien colors and ornaments for want of his own, practicing all the other things that follow along with these, which are clear and not worthwhile to proceed further with, but it's enough that, having defined one chief point, we go on to something else: A body such that, in war or in other times of need that are great, enemies take confidence, and friends and indeed the lovers themselves feel fear.

This matter we must now let go as clear and must then say what
239e comes next: What benefit or what harm for us, as regards possessions, will the intercourse and trusteeship of the lover provide? This at least is quite evident to everyone (and most so to the lover): that he would pray above all that the beloved be bereft of the most friendly, best-disposed, and most divine possessions; for he would accept the beloved's being deprived of father, mother, kin, and friends,
240a considering them hinderers and censors of the most pleasant intercourse with him. But now, if the beloved has an estate of gold or of

66. The Greek *anēr*, here translated "real man," (and at 239c1 simply as "man") designates a male human being and often suggests excellence in distinctively male respects like courage (*andreia*). The generic term for human being is *anthrōpos*.
67. *Phronimos* means intelligent, prudent, sensible, practically wise. See *Gorgias*, second note at 489e.

some other property, he will consider him neither equally easy to catch nor, when caught, as easily manageable; wherefore there is every necessity that the lover must be jealous of the boyfriend's having acquired an estate, and rejoice when it's destroyed. And so, furthermore, the lover would pray that his boyfriend be unwed, childless, without a household, for as long a time as possible, desiring to reap what is sweet for himself for as long a time as possible.

Now, there are other evils too, but some demon mixed pleasure for
240b the immediate moment with most of them. For instance the flatterer, a terribly clever beast and a great harm—all the same nature mixed in a certain pleasure that is not unmusical. And someone might blame the courtesan as harmful, and many other creatures and practices with ways of that sort, which for the day can be very pleasant. But for the boyfriend, the lover tends to be harmful and is the most
240c unpleasant thing of all to pass the day with. For as the ancient saying goes, one of the same age delights another—for I suppose that equality of time leading them to equal pleasures through similarity provides friendship—but all the same, even the association of these has its satiety. And indeed what is compulsory in everything is said furthermore to be grievous for everyone; now, in addition to dissimilarity, this most of all characterizes the lover in relation to the boyfriend. For the older man associating with the younger is willing to be left
240d behind neither night nor day, but is driven by necessity and frenzy[68] that leads him by always giving him pleasures, as he sees, hears, touches, and senses the beloved with every sensation, so that it is with pleasure that he serves the beloved closely. But as for the beloved, by giving what exhortation or what pleasures can the frenzy cause him, associating with the lover for this same time, not to reach the utmost point of unpleasantness—as he sees an older face, and not in the bloom of youth, with the other things that follow along with this,
240e which are not very delightful even to hear in speech, not to mention the ever-pressing necessity to manage them in deed; as he is kept under guard with guards that spy out evil all the time and toward everyone; as he hears untimely and excessive praises, and in the same way reproaches that are not bearable when the lover is sober, but when he has got into strong drink, shameful in addition to unbearable, as he indulges in tiresome and barefaced frankness?

68. *Oistros* can mean gadfly, stinging, frenzy, mad passion.

And while harmful and unpleasant when in love, when he has desisted from love he is not to be trusted in the time afterward, the time for which he made many promises with many oaths and bonds, so
241a that he barely effectuated, through hope of good things, toleration at that time of the burdensome association. But now that he ought to pay off, having changed to another ruler in himself and another leader, intelligence and moderation instead of love and madness, he has become other, which has escaped the boyfriend's notice. And the latter demands of him favor in return for the things of that time, reminding him of things done and things said, as if he's conversing with the same person; but from a sense of shame that one neither dares to say
241b that he has become other nor can he uphold the oaths sworn and the promises made under the earlier mindless rule, now that he has got possession of intelligence and has become moderate, so that he won't, by doing the same things as the earlier man, again become like that one and the same. Indeed he becomes a runaway from these things, and the former lover, having defaulted by necessity, when the shell fell differently,[69] changes and hastens to flight. The other is forced to pursue, vexed and hurling imprecations, having wholly ignored from the beginning that one should never gratify the lover who is of
241c necessity mindless, but much rather the nonlover who has intelligence; if not, one must of necessity give oneself up to someone untrustworthy, disagreeable, jealous, unpleasant, and harmful as regards property, harmful as regards the body's condition, and by far the most harmful as regards the soul's education, than which in truth, for both human beings and gods, there neither is nor shall be anything more honored. These things, then, you must meditate on, my boy, and know that the friendship of a lover does not come into being
241d with goodwill, but in the manner of food, for the sake of repletion, as wolves cherish lambs, so do lovers love boys.[70]

This is it,[71] Phaedrus. You may no longer hear me say anything further, but let the speech have this end for you.

69. The image refers to a game in which one team would pursue and the other flee, according to whether a tossed shell fell dark or light side up.

70. This line has dactylic hexameter meter, used in epic poetry. Plato probably has some proverbial saying in mind, though reference to *Iliad* 22.263 is possible. "Love" here is *philein;* "cherish" is *agapan.*

71. Socrates refers back here to his earlier stated fear that he would break out into poetry.

PHAE.: But I supposed it was in the middle, and would say equal things about the nonlover, how one ought rather to gratify him, telling in turn what good things he has. But as it is, then, Socrates, why have you left off?

241e SOC.: Didn't you perceive, blessed one, that I am already giving voice to epic verses and no longer dithyrambs—and this while blaming? If I should begin to praise the other one, what do you think I shall do? Don't you know that I shall be manifestly possessed by the nymphs, before whom you have thrown me with forethought? So then in one phrase, I say that whatever things we reviled in the one, the good things opposite to these belong to the other. And what need for a long speech? For what has been said about both is sufficient. And so

242a in this way the tale will suffer what it is fitting for it to suffer; and I shall cross this river and depart before I'm forced by you to do something bigger.

PHAE.: Not yet, Socrates, at least not before the scorching heat passes. Or don't you see that it's just now midday—high noon, as it's called? Instead, when we've waited around and at the same time conversed about what has been said, we'll go presently, when it cools off.

SOC.: You're just divine about speeches, Phaedrus, and simply[72] amazing. For I suppose that, of the speeches that have come into being in

242b your lifetime, no one has caused more to come into being than you, whether by saying them yourself or by compelling others in some one way—I take Simmias the Theban[73] out of the account; you dominate the others by very much—and now once more you seem to me to have become the cause of a certain speech's being spoken.

PHAE.: You are not declaring war, at any rate. But how, then, and what speech is this?

SOC.: As I was going to cross the river, good man, the demonic thing and the sign that customarily arises for me arose—and on each occa-

242c sion it holds me back from what I am going to do—and I seemed at that very moment to hear a certain voice, which is not allowing me to go away before I have made expiation, on the grounds that I have committed some fault toward the divine. I really am, then, a prophet, though not a very serious one, but just like those who are poor at let-

72. *Atechnōs*, "simply" or "absolutely," has the root meaning "without art."

73. He is most familiar to us from his crucial role, especially at 85c–d, in Plato's *Phaedo*, Socrates' discussion of the soul's immortality on the last day of his life.

ters,[74] I am just sufficient for myself alone. And so now I clearly do understand the fault. Since indeed, comrade, the soul too is something prophetic; for something disturbed me even as I was just now speaking the speech, and I was somehow put out of countenance, according to Ibycus, lest by "doing something amiss with the gods, I
242d should take in exchange honor from human beings."[75] And now I have perceived the fault.

PHAE.: What, then, do you say it is?

SOC.: Terrible, Phaedrus, terrible is the speech that you yourself introduced and forced me to speak!

PHAE.: How so?

SOC.: Simpleminded and somewhat impious; what speech might be more terrible than this?

PHAE.: None, at least if what you say is true.

SOC.: What then? Don't you consider Love to be from Aphrodite and to be a god?

PHAE.: So it is said, at least.

SOC.: But not by Lysias's or by your speech, which was spoken by you
242e through my mouth, when it had been bewitched by drugs. But if Love is, as so he is, a god or something divine, he would be nothing bad; but these two speeches just now spoke of him as being such. In this way, then, they were at fault about Love; and still their simplemind-
243a edness was quite urbane, while saying nothing healthy or true, to put on a solemn air as though they were something, if perchance by deceiving some little human beings they will enjoy good reputation among them. So then for me, friend, it is necessary to purify myself. For those at fault concerning the telling of tales there is an antique purification, which Homer did not know about, but Stesichorus did.[76] For having been deprived of his eyes on account of his evil-speaking about Helen, he did not ignore the cause, as Homer did, but, since he was musical, he knew it, and straightaway he composed:

74. *Grammata* could also mean writings; see note on *gramma* at 229e.

75. Ibycus was a lyric poet of the sixth century B.C. The *OCD* (*Oxford Classical Dictionary;* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949) describes him thus: "He has a rich and brilliant style, a vivid imagination, a great capacity for describing the emotions, especially love, and a real love of nature."

76. Socrates seems here to refer to a tradition that Homer was blinded for his speaking ill of Helen. Stesichorus was a lyric poet of the sixth century B.C.; the quotation is frag. 32 Bergk.

This speech is not genuine:
She did not go on the well-benched ships,
243b Nor did she come to Pergamon of Troy.

And having composed the whole *Palinode*, as it is called, he regained his sight on the spot. So then I shall turn out to be wiser than they in this very respect, at any rate: before suffering anything on account of my evil-speaking about Love, I shall try to give him back the palinode, with bare head and not, as then, veiled because of a sense of shame.

PHAE.: None of the things you've said to me, Socrates, are more pleasant than these.

243c SOC.: Indeed so, good Phaedrus, for you are reflecting on how shamelessly the two speeches were said, this one and the one pronounced from the book. For if someone of noble breeding[77] and gentle in character, who loved another such person or else had loved at some earlier time, happened to hear us saying how lovers take up great enmities on account of small matters and behave jealously and harmfully toward their boyfriends—how could you not suppose that he would consider he was hearing people who had been raised mostly among sailors and had seen no love worthy of free men,[78] and that he
243d would be far from agreeing with us on the things for which we blamed Love?

PHAE.: Perhaps so, by Zeus, Socrates.

SOC.: Accordingly I for one feel shame before this man and fear before Love himself, and so I desire to wash away with fresh speech the briny bitterness, as it were, of what we heard. And I counsel Lysias too to write as quickly as possible that in like ways[79] one must gratify the lover rather than the nonlover.

PHAE.: Know well, then, that so it will be. For when you have spoken the lover's praise, there is every necessity that Lysias will be com-
243e pelled by me to write in turn a speech about the same thing.

77. *Gennadas* used here is a Doric equivalent to *gennaios* (which I've translated "nobly born"; see *Gorgias*, note at 485d). The effect of this term may be subtly comic.

78. Literally translated: "free love."

79. Some translators, including R. Hackforth (Plato's "Phaedrus," [Translated with Introduction and Commentary] [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952]) and LSJ (*A Greek-English Lexicon*, by H. G. Liddell and R. S. Scott, new edition revised and augmented by H. S. Jones [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940; reprinted 1961]), take this phrase to mean "all things being equal."

SOC.: In this I really put my trust, so long as you are who you are.
PHAE.: So then speak with confidence.
SOC.: Where then is that boy of mine, to whom I was speaking?—so that he may hear this too, and not, unhearing, gratify the nonlover beforehand.
PHAE.: He is beside you, very near, always present, whenever you wish.

SOC.: So then, beautiful boy, reflect in this way that the former speech
244a was that of Phaedrus, son of Pythocles, a Myrrhinousian man;[80] the one I am going to speak is of Stesichorus son of Euphemus, a Himeraian.[81] And it must be spoken as follows: The speech is not genuine which asserts that, when the lover is around, one must rather gratify the nonlover, on the grounds that the one is mad, the other of sound mind.[82] For if it were simply the case that madness is something bad, it would be beautifully said; but as things are, the greatest of good things come into being for us through madness, when, that is, it is given with a divine giving. For the prophetess in Delphi and
244b the priestesses in Dodona when mad have accomplished many beautiful things for Greece both in private and in public, but little, or rather nothing, when of sound mind. And if we should then speak of the Sibyl and others, who used divinely inspired prophesy to foretell in the future many things to many people and guide them aright, we would draw it out at length, saying things that are clear to everyone. The following is worth calling to witness: that those of the ancients who set down names also considered madness neither something
244c shameful nor a reproach; for they would not have woven this very name into the most beautiful art, by which the future is discerned, and called it "the manic art." But they set down its name with this belief, that it is beautiful when it comes into being by a divine allotment; but people today, with inexperience in beautiful things, throw on a *t* and call it "the mantic art."[83] And then too they gave the name

80. "Myrrhinousian" refers to Phaedrus's deme (a political subdivision of Athens; see *Gorgias* 495d); the formal mode of address creates, or perhaps satirizes, a solemn tone here.
81. The etymological elements of "Euphemus" make one think of "speaking well," the opposite of "blasphemy." "Himeraian" makes one think of the noun *himeros*, meaning longing, desire, love.
82. The same word, *sōphrōn*, has been translated "moderate" in other contexts. See *Gorgias* 489e and 507a (and notes there).
83. "The manic art" or art of madness translates *manikē*; "the mantic art" renders *mantikē*, elsewhere translated "art of prophesy" or divination.

"art of understanding-thought-information" [*oionoïstikē*] to the seeking of the future by people in their minds, who do it through birds and the other signs, seeing that from rational thinking they provide, through human understanding [*oiēsis*], thought [*nous*] and information [*historia*],[84] which the young today call "the art of bird augury" [*oiōnistikē*], making it more solemn with the long *ō*; so then, by as much as the art of prophecy is more perfect and more honored than the art of bird augury—the name more than the other name and the deed more than the other deed—by so much do the ancients testify that madness coming into being from god is more beautiful than soundness of mind from among human beings. And truly madness, springing up in and prophesying to those for whom it had to, found deliverance from the greatest sicknesses and toils, which were in certain families somehow from ancient guilts, by taking refuge in prayers to the gods and rituals, from which, happening upon purifications and rites, it put him who partakes of it out of danger for the present and the time thereafter, having found release from present evils for him who was correctly mad and possessed. And third, possession and madness from the Muses, seizing a tender and untrodden soul, arousing it and exciting it to a Bacchic frenzy toward both odes and other poetry,[85] adorns ten thousand works of the ancients and so educates posterity; but he who comes to poetic doors without the Muses' madness, persuaded that he will then be an adequate poet from art, himself fails of his purpose, and the poetry by the man of sound mind is obliterated by that of the madmen.

So many, and still more, are the beautiful deeds of madness arising from gods that I can tell you. So let us then not fear this very thing, at any rate, and do not let some speech disturb and frighten us, saying that one must choose as friend, rather than him who has been moved, the man of sound mind; but let the latter carry off the prizes of victory only when he has shown, in the presence of the former, that love is not sent to the lover and the beloved from gods for their benefit. Now we in turn must demonstrate the opposite, that such madness is given from gods for the greatest good fortune; and the demonstration will be untrustworthy for the terribly clever, but trustworthy

84. This kind of far-fetched etymology is found most abundantly in Plato's *Cratylus*. See the similar treatment of *erōs* at 238c.

85. *Poiēsis*, here translated "poetry," could well be translated "composition" and has also the more general meaning of "making."

for the wise. One must first, therefore, grasp in thought the truth about the nature of the soul, both divine and human, by seeing its experiences and deeds. The beginning of the demonstration is the following.

All soul[86] is deathless. For that which is always moving is deathless; and that which moves something else and is moved by something else, since it has a stopping of motion, has a stopping of life. Only that which moves itself, then, since it does not abandon itself, never ceases from moving, but this is also the source and beginning
245d of motion for whatever other things are moved. A beginning has no coming into being. For every thing that comes into being must of necessity come into being from a beginning, but the latter must not come from anything, for if the beginning came into being from something, it would no longer be a beginning.[87] And since it has no coming into being, it itself must of necessity be also incorruptible. For with the beginning destroyed, it will never come into being from something nor will anything else come into being from it, if indeed all things must come into being from a beginning. Thus, then, that very thing that moves itself is the beginning of motion. And this is not able either to be destroyed or to come into being, or else all the
245e heavens and all coming into being would collapse and stand still,[88] and would never again have the capacity to become moved. Now, since that which is moved by itself has been revealed as deathless, one will feel no sense of shame in saying that this very thing is the essence[89] and rational account of the soul. All body, indeed, to which being moved comes from outside is soulless; but all body to which being moved comes from within to itself from itself is ensouled, seeing that this is the nature of soul. If this is indeed the case, that that which
246a itself moves itself is nothing other than soul, soul would of necessity have no coming into being and be deathless.

So then, concerning its immortality, that's sufficient; but concern-

86. Taking *pasa* collectively; taking it distributively, "every soul. . . ."

87. This last clause translates Buttman's emendation, accepted by Burnet. De Vries prefers Hermann's construction of the leading manuscript reading, which would yield "it [viz., everything that comes into being] would not come into being as from a beginning [viz., beginning qua *the* first principle]."

88. "All the heavens" (or the whole heaven) here means something like the whole universe. Another reading, accepted by Burnet, would render: "the whole heaven and the whole earth would collapse into one and stand still."

89. *Ousia*, elsewhere translated "substance" or "being."

ing its *idea*, one must speak in the following manner. What sort of thing it is, is altogether in every way a matter for a divine and long narration,[90] but what it is like, for a human and lesser one; let us then speak in this manner. It is like some naturally conjoined[91] power of a winged team and a charioteer. Of the gods, then, the horses and charioteers are all good themselves and of good ancestry,[92] but as regards
246b the others, there has been a mixture. And of us, first, the ruler holds the reins of the pair; and then of his horses, one is noble and good and of such ancestry, the other is of opposite ancestry and opposite; hard indeed and troublesome, of necessity, is the charioteering that concerns us. One must try to say how a living being[93] got called both mortal and deathless. All soul takes care of every soulless thing, and traverses all the heavens, at various times coming into being in vari-
246c ous forms. And so when it is perfect and winged,[94] it travels on high and governs the whole cosmos,[95] but when it has lost its wings, it is borne on until it lays hold of something solid, and having settled down there and taken on an earthy body, which itself seems to move itself through the soul's power, the whole thing together, soul and body stuck fast, is called *living being* and has the surname *mortal*. What's called *deathless*, by contrast, is not from one rational account that's been figured out; but we fashion god, without either having
246d seen or adequately perceived him in thought, as a certain deathless living being, which has a soul and has a body, with these naturally grown together for all time. But let these things be and be said in the way that is dear to the god; let us now grasp the cause of the wings'[96] being thrown off, through which they fall off the soul. And it is something of this sort.

90. Compare the "longer and further road" not taken, also about the soul, in *Republic* 435d. Consider too how importantly the capacity to use images or likenesses figures in this dialogue's later analysis of rhetoric.

91. Or more literally, "grown-together." Another manuscript reading would yield a different beginning of this sentence: "Let it be like a naturally conjoined. . . ."

92. More literally, "good and from good ones." This aristocratic formula (see "better and of better ancestry" at *Gorgias* 512d) is oddly thought-provoking as applied to gods.

93. *Zōon* is also the normal word for "animal."

94. Or one might translate, "full fledged." This and several other words with the root *pter* may involve the idea either of "wing" or of "feather." Thus just subsequent, "lost its wings" could be "lost its feathers," "molted." Wordplay on *ptero-* and *erōs* becomes explicit at 252b.

95. A possible alternate meaning would be "resides throughout the whole cosmos," that is, not fixed in one determinate location.

96. Or "feathers."

The wing's power naturally tends to lead what is weighty up, raising it on high to where the race of the gods dwells; and of the things pertaining to the body, it most of all has in some way a common share
246e of the divine—and the divine is beautiful, wise, good, and everything of that sort. By these, then, is the soul's plumage most of all fostered and increased; but by the ugly, bad, and the other opposites it wastes away and is destroyed. The great leader in the heavens, Zeus, driving a winged chariot, proceeds first, ordering and taking care of all things; and an army of gods and demons follows him, ordered
247a into eleven parts. For Hestia alone remains in the gods' home.[97] Of the other gods who have been ranged in the number of the twelve, the rulers lead in the rank in which each has been ranged. So then, many and blessed are the sights and pathways within the heavens, along which the race of happy gods passes to and fro, each one of them doing his own thing; and he who on each occasion is willing and able, follows: for envy stands outside the divine chorus. And
247b then, when they go toward the feast and to the banquet, they proceed uphill now to the summit of the arch under the heavens. The gods' vehicles, in equal balance, being obedient to the reins, proceed easily; but the others with difficulty: for the horse that has a share of badness is heavy, sinking toward the earth and weighing down the charioteer by whom he has been not beautifully reared. There indeed toil and the ultimate contest lie before the soul. Now the souls that are called deathless, when they have come toward the summit, proceed
247c outside and stand on the ridge of the heavens; and as they stand fast, the rotation leads them around, and they see the things outside the heavens.

As for the place above the heavens, no poet from among those here has yet sung or ever will sing of it as it deserves. This is how it is—for one must indeed dare to say what is true, especially when one is talking about the truth—to wit, really existing being, colorless and shapeless and impalpable, visible to the mind alone, the soul's helmsman, with which the class[98] of true knowledge is concerned, occupies
247d this place. So then the thought of god, nourished with mind and undefiled knowledge, and the thought of every soul that is destined to receive what is fitting, in time sees what is and greets it with affec-

97. Hestia, the goddess of the hearth, is often identified with the earth (De Vries cites in particular Euripides frag. 944 Nauck).

98. *Genos*, translated previously as "race," e.g., of the happy gods.

tion, and looking at true things is nourished and feels good, until the rotation carries it around in a circle to the same place. And on the way round it beholds justice itself; it beholds moderation; it beholds knowledge, not that to which coming into being is linked, nor which is in some manner different when it is in respect of different things
247e that we now call beings, but the knowledge that is in respect of what really is being. And in the same way having seen and feasted upon the other beings that really are, it sinks back into the place within the heavens and goes home. And when it has gone, the charioteer, stationing the horses before the manger, throws out ambrosia and gives in addition nectar to drink.[99]

248a And this is the gods' life. Now, as for the other souls—the one that best follows and likens itself to god lifts the charioteer's head up into the place outside, and it is carried around with the rotation, thrown into confusion by the horses and with difficulty beholding the beings. Another soul at one time raises up, at another sinks down, and with the horses acting violently, it sees some things, but others not. And the other souls now, all eagerly longing for what is above, follow, but lack the power and are carried around together below the surface,
248b treading on each other and jostling, one trying to get in front of another. So then confusion and conflict and the utmost sweat arise, where through the charioteers' badness many are maimed, and many have many wings broken. And despite their having much toil, all go away unfulfilled in respect to the sight of being, and having gone away, they make use of opinion for nourishment. For the sake of what, then, is it a matter of much seriousness to see there where the plain of truth is? It's both that the pasturage befitting what is best in the
248c soul happens to be from the meadow there, and that the nature of the wing, by which the soul is lightened, is nourished on this. Now the following is Adrasteia's[100] ordinance. Whatever soul, having become a follower along with god, beholds something of the true things, shall be free of misery until the next[101] going around; and if it can always do this, it shall be always free of harm. But when, lacking the power to follow, it does not see and, having experienced some mischance, filled with forgetfulness and badness, it is weighed down, and hav-

99. This passage evokes Homer, *Iliad* 5.368f.
100. Another name (with the connotation "inescapable") for Nemesis, who punishes deeds of *hubris* (see 238a and note there), or for Necessity.
101. Or "second"; more literally, "other;" cf. the "third" at 249a.

ing been weighed down it loses its wings and falls toward the earth,
248d then the law is that this soul shall not on its first coming into being implant in any bestial nature, but the one that has seen the most things shall implant in that which will engender a man who will become a philosopher or lover of the beautiful or someone musical[102] and erotic; the second in that of a lawful king or a warlike and commanding one; the third in that of a statesman[103] or some household manager or businessman; the fourth in that of a lover of gymnastic toil or someone who will be concerned with healing the body; the
248e fifth will have a prophetic life or a life occupied with mystic rites; to the sixth, a poetic life or some other one of those concerned with imitation will be fitted; to the seventh, a craftsmanlike or farming; to the eighth, a sophistic or demagogic; for the ninth, a tyrannical. Now in all these, whoever passes his life justly receives a better allotment afterwards, and whoever unjustly, a worse. For each soul does not arrive at the same place from which it has come for ten thousand
249a years—for it is not furnished with wings before so much time—except for the soul of one who has philosophized without fraud[104] or loved boys with philosophy; these souls, on the third thousand-year way round, when they have chosen this life three times in a row, having thus been furnished with wings, go away on the three thousandth year. The other souls, when they have brought the first life to an end, meet with judgment, and having been judged, some go to the places of just punishment under the earth and pay off the just penalty; the others go to a certain place of the heavens, having been lightened by Dike,[105] and pass their time in a manner worthy of the life that
249b they lived in human form. In the thousandth year, both sets of souls, arriving at the lottery and choice of the second life, choose the one that each wishes. There it happens both that a human soul goes into a beast's life and that one who was once a human being goes out of a beast back into a human being. For at any rate the soul that has never seen the truth will not come into this shape. For a human being must understand that which is said in reference to form, that

102. In the *Phaedo* (at 61a) Socrates reports his belief that philosophy is the greatest music.
103. *Politikos:* political man, politician, statesman; someone possessing competence in matters political.
104. Cf. *Gorgias* 451e and note there.
105. *Dikē,* the goddess Justice or Judgment, is the same word translated just previously as "just penalty."

249c which, going from many perceptions, is gathered together into one by reasoning. And this is the recollection of those things that our soul saw once upon a time, when it proceeded along with god and looked down upon the things that we now assert to be, and lifted up its head into the being that really is. And therefore, justly indeed, only the philosopher's thought is furnished with wings; for through memory he is always to the best of his power near those things, through being near which god is divine. And the man who correctly uses such reminders, always fulfilling perfect rites—only he becomes really per-
249d fected.[106] Standing back from matters of human seriousness and coming to be near the divine, he is rebuked by the many as moved out of his senses, but that he is inspired by god[107] escaped the notice of the many.

So then, here indeed comes to the fore the whole argument about the fourth madness—madness, whenever someone, seeing beauty here below and recollecting true beauty, is furnished with wings, and, raising his new wings with eager striving to fly up, but lacking the power, looking up after the manner of a bird but having no care
249e for the things below, he takes the blame for being in a manic condition—that this, therefore, proves to be of all inspirations the best and of the best ancestry, both for him who has it and for him who communicates a share of it, and that he who participates in this madness, as one who loves the beautiful ones,[108] is called *lover*. For in accordance with what has been said, every soul of a human being by na-
250a ture has beheld the beings, or it would not have gone into this living being; but it is not easy for every soul to recollect those things from the ones here—neither the souls that then saw the things there briefly, nor those that fell hither and met with misfortune, so that under the influence of certain associations, turning toward what is unjust, they forget the holy things they saw at that time. Few, then, are the souls that remain for which adequate memory is at hand. And these souls, when they see some likeness of the things there, are astounded and no longer in possession of themselves, and they do not

106. "Perfected" or "fulfilled," or "initiated." The words translated "fulfilling," "perfect," "rites," and "perfected," all building on the root *tele-*, provide a notable play on words.
107. *Enthousiazōn:* a related noun is translated "inspiration" in the next sentence, 249e. At 241e Socrates' use of the same verb was translated more strongly as "possessed."
108. Or "beautiful things" (the gender could be masculine or neuter). "Lover," *erastēs*, is perhaps suggested to have come from "loving" (*erōn*) and "best" (*aristēs*, applied to this fourth madness).

250b recognize what the experience is, on account of not perceiving with sufficient clarity. Now then, in the likenesses here of justice and of moderation and of the other things held in honor by souls, there is no splendor; but through dim organs, only a few people, with difficulty, going to the things' images, behold the kind of what is imaged. But at that time beauty was bright to see, when with a happy chorus they saw the blessed sight and vision—we following with Zeus, others with another of the gods—and accomplished that one of the rites that
250c it is right to say is most blessed; a rite that we celebrated being ourselves whole and without experience of the evils which awaited us in later time, initiated into and as full initiates gazing in pure bright light upon whole, simple, calm, and happy appearances, we being pure and unmarked[109] with this thing we now, fettered in the manner of an oyster, carry around and name *body.*

So then let these things be a gracious tribute to memory, through which they have now been stated at rather great length, in yearning for the things of that time. As regards beauty, as we said, when it was
250d with those things it shone forth, and we coming hither have seized hold of it as the most brightly glistening thing through the brightest of our senses. For sight comes to us as the sharpest of the senses that work through the body; but by it prudence is not seen—for it would produce terrible loves, if it presented some such bright image of itself to come to sight, and so would the other beloved things. But as it is, only beauty has this allotment, so as to be most manifest and loveli-
250e est. Now then, he who is not newly initiated or has been corrupted is not quickly carried from here to that place toward beauty itself, when he has beheld its namesake here, and in consequence he does not feel awe as he gazes at it; but giving way to pleasure after the custom of four-footed beasts, he endeavors to mount and to sow children, and
251a mingling with wantonness he feels neither fear nor shame at hunting pleasure contrary to nature. But the recent initiate, one of those who saw much at that time, whenever he sees a godlike face, or perhaps the *idea* of a body, that imitates beauty well, first he shivers[110] and something of the dreadful things of that time comes upon him; next, gazing at him he feels awe as before a god, and if he did not fear the reputation of excessive madness, he would sacrifice to the boyfriend

109. A mark, *sēma,* can also refer to a burial marker or tomb; hence the phrase may allude to the conception of the body as the soul's tomb (cf. *Gorgias* 493a).

110. De Vries notes that this wording may remind one of Sappho's famous poem; see 235c.

as to a statue and a god. And while he looks, a change, with sweating and unaccustomed heat, such as arises out of shivering, takes hold of him. Receiving through the eyes the efflux of beauty, by which the wing's nature is watered, he is heated; as he is heated, the parts around where it would grow out, which, shut up with stiffness, formerly barred it from budding, melt; and as the nourishment flows in, the wing's shaft swells and starts to grow from the root, under the soul's whole form—for the whole soul was formerly winged. Hence the whole soul boils in him and seethes. And the soul of him who is beginning to grow wings experiences the same experience that happens around the teeth to those cutting teeth, when they are just growing them—itching and irritation around the gums: it boils and is irritated and tickles around the growing wings. Now then, whenever the soul, looking upon the boy's beauty and receiving particles that come upon it and flow from there (indeed, on account of these things, it is called "longing"),[111] is watered and heated, it abates from its distress and rejoices. But whenever it is apart and parched, the orifices of the passageways where the wing starts, also dried up and closed, shut off the wing's budding; each budding, shut off inside with longing and throbbing like pulsating arteries, pricks the passageway that belongs to each, so that the whole soul, goaded all round, is stung and distressed—but having memory afresh of the beautiful one, it rejoices. From both things being mixed together, it is sorely troubled by the strangeness of the experience and, at a loss, is in a frenzy; and, being madly frantic, it can neither sleep at night nor remain wherever it is by day, but it runs yearning wherever it thinks it will see the one who possesses beauty. And seeing and letting the water of longing pour in, it dissolves the things that had then been clogged up, and catching its breath, is released from goads and pangs[112] and in turn harvests in the present this sweetest pleasure. From this, to be sure, it is not willing to be separated; nor does it make more of anyone than of the beautiful one, but forgets mothers and brothers and all comrades; and when its property is destroyed through neglect, it sets

111. "Longing," *himeros* (see second note at 244a) is fancifully derived here from *ienai* (to go), *merē* (parts, here translated "particles"), and *rhoē* (flux). The terms used are characteristic of much pre-Socratic philosophy of nature or *phusiologia*, most notably Empedocles' theory of light and vision.

112. This term is used most commonly of the pangs of childbirth; it is also applied, as here, to love.

that down as next to nothing; despising all the conventional customs and graceful refinements, on which hitherto it prided itself,[113] it is ready to serve as a slave and to sleep wherever one allows, nearest its
252b yearning. For in addition to feeling awe at the one who possesses beauty, it has found him to be the only doctor for the greatest painful toils. This is the experience, beautiful boy to whom my speech is indeed directed, that human beings name *love;* but when you hear what the gods call it, you'll likely laugh on account of your youth. Some of the Homeridae,[114] I think, from the secret verses recite two verses about Love [*Erōs*], of which the second is quite outrageous and not very metrical. They sing thus:

Mortals call him flying Love [*Erōs*],
The immortals call him Winged [*Pterōs*], on account of wing-growing necessity.[115]

252c It is possible to believe these verses, and it is possible not to. Nevertheless, the cause and the experience of lovers happens to be just this.

Now then, one of Zeus's followers who is possessed can bear more weightily the burden of the wing-named one. Those, on the other hand, who are attendants of Ares[116] and went around with that one, whenever they are seized by Love and think they are suffering some injustice from the beloved, are murderous and ready to sacrifice both
252d themselves and the boyfriend. And thus after the manner of each god, to whose chorus each person belonged, he lives honoring and imitating that one to the extent of his power, so long as he is uncorrupted and lives out the first coming-into-being here below, and in this fashion he associates with and behaves toward beloveds and others. And so each person picks out from the beautiful ones his love after his fashion; and he constructs and adorns for himself a sort of
252e statue of that one, as a god, for him to honor and celebrate. So then, those of Zeus seek someone heavenly[117] in soul to be the one loved

113. *Kallōpizō* contains the root *kallos,* "beauty." One might translate "embellished itself." (At 236d, I have translated it "to play coy.")
114. Literally, "descendants of Homer"; admirers, reciters, or scholars of Homer are meant.
115. One is reminded of many passages, e.g., *Iliad* 1.403–4, where Homer gives names used by gods that differ from those used by men.
116. The god of war.
117. The adjective *dios* (heavenly, noble, illustrious) is closely similar to oblique cases of *Zeus,* such as *Dios* here.

by them; therefore they look into whether he is in his nature philosophic and capable of leadership, and whenever they find him and fall in love, they do everything so that he will be such. So if they have not previously embarked upon the practice, then they put their hand to it and learn from wherever they can learn something, and they themselves pursue it; and hunting to find out by themselves the na-
253a ture of their god, they prosper through being intensely compelled to look toward the god; and so reaching him through memory, inspired by that one, they take up his habits and practices, to the extent that it is possible for a human being to have a share in common with a god. And, alleging that the beloved is the cause of these things, they cherish him still more. And if they draw the water of inspiration from Zeus, just like bacchants pouring water onto the beloved's soul, they
253b make him as like as possible to their god. Those, in turn, who followed after Hera,[118] seek someone kingly, and having found one, they do all the same things regarding him. Those of Apollo, and of each of the gods, go thus after the fashion of the god and seek the boy that is naturally theirs; and when they have acquired him, they themselves imitate, and they persuade and rehearse the boyfriend, so as to lead him into the practice and *idea* of that one, to the extent of each one's power, using neither envy nor illiberal ill will toward the boyfriend,
253c but trying as much as possible to lead him wholly into complete likeness to themselves and the god that they honor—this is how they act. Now then, the eagerness of those who truly love and the rite—at least if they accomplish what they are eager to in the way I am saying—thus become, under the influence of the friend who is mad through love, beautiful and productive of happiness for the loved one,[119] if he is caught. And whoever is caught is indeed caught in just such a way.

Just as in the beginning of this tale we divided each soul in three, into some two horse-shaped forms and a third charioteer form, now
253d too let these still stand for us. Of the horses, then, we assert that one is good, the other not. But we did not tell fully what is the virtue of the good one, or the badness of the bad one, but now we must say. Well then, of the two, the one in the more beautiful position[120] is straight in form and well jointed, somewhat hook nosed, white to the

118. *Zeus's* sister and wife.
119. "Loved one" here comes from the verb *philein*.
120. That is, on the right side.

sight, black eyed, a lover of honor with moderation and with a sense of shame, and a comrade of truthful opinion,[121] unbeaten, guided by command alone and speech. The other, in turn, is crooked, big and
253e randomly slung together, strong necked, short necked, snub nosed, black skinned, gray eyed, bloodshot, a comrade of wantonness and boasting, shaggy about the ears, deaf, barely yielding to the whip and goads. So then, when the charioteer, seeing the beloved's eye,[122] heating his whole soul through with the sensation, begins to be filled with the goads of tickling and yearning, that one of the horses who
254a is obedient to the charioteer, then as always forcibly constrained by a sense of shame, holds himself back from rushing upon the beloved. The other one no longer turns in heed either to the charioteer's goads or whip, but leaps and is carried along by force and, presenting all possible troubles to its yoke-mate and charioteer, compels them to go toward the boyfriend and to make mention[123] of the delight of sexual
254b gratifications. These two in the beginning strive against it with irritation, on the grounds that they are being compelled to terrible and unlawful things. But at last, when there is no end to the evil, they are led to go on, giving way and agreeing to do what is bidden. And they come before him and see the boyfriend's face, flashing like lightning. And as the charioteer sees, his memory is carried toward the nature of beauty and sees it once more together with moderation, standing on a chaste pedestal. And upon seeing, he is afraid and, feeling awe,
254c recoils on his back, and at the same time is compelled to pull the reins back so vehemently, that both horses sit down on their haunches, the one willingly through not striving against it, the wanton one very unwillingly. As the two withdraw farther off, the one soaks the whole soul with sweat from shame and amazement; the other, ceasing from the pain that it had from the bit and the fall, barely catching its breath reviles them in anger, badmouthing the charioteer and its yoke-mate in many ways, on the grounds that through cowardice and unman-
254d liness they quit the rank and the agreement. And in compelling them against their wish to go forward again, it barely yields to their begging to put it off until later. And when the agreed-on time comes, of which the two pretend to be unmindful, by reminding, constraining,

121. Or "truthful renown."
122. Literally, "the erotic eye."
123. More literally, "make (or compose) reminders" (*mneia*, connected with *mnēmē*, memory).

neighing, pulling, it compels them again to approach the boyfriend, for the purpose of the same speeches. And when they are nearby, it stoops down, stretches out its tail, and champs at the bit, and so pulls
254e with shamelessness. The charioteer, however, suffering the same experience still more, recoiling as if from the starting gate,[124] drawing the bit still more with force back out of the wanton horse's teeth, bloodies the evil-speaking tongue and jaws and, causing its upper legs and haunches to rest upon the earth, gives them over to pains.[125] And when, by suffering the same thing many times, the knavish one ceases from wantonness, having been humbled at last it follows the charioteer's forethought, and whenever it sees the beautiful one, it is utterly destroyed by fear; so that then at last it happens that the lover's
255a soul follows the boyfriend feeling a sense of shame and dread. So then, seeing that he is served with all possible service as if equal to a god, and by a lover who is not making a show of it but has truly experienced this, and that he himself is by nature friend to him who serves: even if, therefore, he has earlier been imposed upon by schoolfellows or perhaps others, saying that it is shameful to consort with a lover, and on this account he repelled the lover, now as time goes
255b forward, maturing age and necessity lead him to admit him into his society. For at no time has it ever been allotted by fate for a bad man to be friend to a bad man nor for a good man not to be friend to a good man. When the beloved has thus admitted him and accepted both speech and association, the lover's goodwill, coming to be at close quarters, astounds him, and he perceives that all the others together, both friends and relatives, provide no allotment of friendship in comparison with the god-inspired friend. And when he continues over time to do this and consorts together, with touching, in gymna-
255c siums and in other places of association, then at last the stream of that flow, which Zeus in love with Ganymede named longing,[126] is borne in great amount toward the lover, and part of it enters into him, and part, when he is filled to the brim, flows away outward.

124. That is, before the gate is thrown open to start the race (as De Vries suggests).

125. The last phrase is poetic, and reminds one of Homer, e.g., *Iliad* 5.397 and *Odyssey* 17.567.

126. *Himeros*, "longing," is again fancifully derived from the root "flow," *rheuma;* see 251c and note there. According to Homer (*Iliad* 20.232–35) Ganymede, son of king Tros (who ruled the Trojans), the most beautiful of mortal human beings, was carried off by the gods on account of his beauty to be Zeus's wine pourer. Later renditions of the tale make Zeus in love with him (see for instance Plato's *Laws* 636d). In Xenophon's *Symposium* 8.30 Socrates asserts that Zeus carried Ganymede off "for the sake not of (his) body but of (his) soul."

And just as a breeze or perhaps an echo, springing from smooth and solid objects, is borne back whence it set forth, so the flow of beauty, going back into the beautiful one through the eyes, arrives where it is naturally disposed to go into the soul and sets him on the wing; it
255d waters the wings' passages and urges on the growing of wings and fills the beloved's soul in its turn full of love. Therefore he loves; but what? He is at a loss. He does not know what he has experienced nor can he tell; but just as someone who has caught ophthalmia from another is not able to state the cause, so it escaped his notice that he is seeing himself in the mirror, in the lover. And when that one is present, in the same ways as that one he ceases from pain; and when he is absent, again in the same ways he yearns and is yearned for, hav-
255e ing return-love, the image of love. And he calls it, and thinks it to be, not love but friendship. In nearly the same way as that one, but less strongly, he desires to see, touch, kiss, lie down together; and then, as is likely, soon after this he does these things. So then in their lying together, the lover's licentious horse has things to say to the charioteer, and claims it deserves, in return for many toils, to have some small
256a enjoyments. But the boyfriend's horse has nothing to say, but swelling and at a loss it embraces and kisses the lover, welcoming him kindly as being of exceeding goodwill; and when they lie down together, it is ready not utterly to deny for its own part to gratify the lover, if he should beg to succeed; but the yoke-mate, on the other hand, along with the charioteer, strives against these things, with a sense of shame and with argument. So then, if the better parts of their thought conquer, leading them into a well-arranged way of life and philosophy,
256b they lead a blessed life and a life of one mind here below, being masters of themselves and orderly, enslaved in regard to that by which the soul's badness was arising within, freed in regard to that by which virtue was arising. And in the end, then, having become winged and light, they have won one victory in the three wrestling bouts that are truly Olympic.[127] There is no greater good than this that either human moderation or divine madness is capable of providing to a hu-
256c man being. But if they use a way of life that is coarser and unphilosophic, but honor loving,[128] perhaps in drunkenness or in some other carelessness their two licentious yoked beasts, having caught the

127. In the Olympic Games, a wrestler had to throw his opponent three times to win and receive the victor's crown.

128. "Honor loving" (*philotimos*), like "philosophic," uses the *phil-* root for love. See second note at 256e and first note at 227c.

souls off guard and led them together for the same purpose, grasp and accomplish the choice that is deemed blessed by the many. And having accomplished this choice, now they make use of it hereafter, but rarely, seeing that they are doing things that have not been resolved by their whole thought. So then these two too, albeit less so than those for-
256d mer two, live as friends with each other, both during their love and when they have passed beyond it, in the belief that they have given and received from each other the greatest pledges of trust, which it is not righteous to dissolve so as ever to enter into enmity. And then in the end they go out of the body unwinged, yet having eagerly striven to get wings, so that they carry off no small prize of erotic madness. For it is the law that those who have once begun the journey beneath the heavens are no longer to go into darkness and the journey under earth, but
256e they are to be happy, leading a bright life, journeying with each other, and to become winged alike for love's sake, when they become so.

Such great gifts as these, boy, and divine ones, will friendship from a lover thus present you. But intimacy[129] from the nonlover, watered down with mortal moderation, administering mortal and miserly things with economy, producing in the friend's[130] soul illiberality
257a that is praised by the multitude as virtue, will make it roll mindlessly around the earth and under the earth for nine thousand years.

This palinode, the most beautiful and the best possible, within our power, has been given and paid to you, dear Love; it was compelled through Phaedrus to be stated poetically both in other respects and especially in its poetic diction.[131] Well then, with pardon for the earlier things and favor for these, kindly and propitious, may you through anger neither take away nor maim the erotic art of mine[132] that you have granted, and grant that, still more than now, it may be
257b held in honor among the beautiful ones. And if in the previous speech Phaedrus and I said anything rough[133] to you, blame Lysias,

129. *Oikeiotēs* primarily means being *oikeios*, that is, of the same family or kin.

130. The word rendered "friend's" here is the adjective *philos*, which sometimes has to be rendered "dear," as in the immediately ensuing invocation of Love (*Erōs*). The question of the relation of love and friendship (*philia*) is important, at several points in this dialogue, in the *Symposium*, in the *Laws* 8, and throughout the *Lysis*.

131. See the similar terms used in 234c by Phaedrus to praise Lysias's speech.

132. Although often denying the possession of knowledge or expertise, for instance in the *Gorgias* at 509a, Socrates on several occasions claims to have expertise concerning *erōs:* most notably in the *Symposium* at 177d–e.

133. Or "discordant," according to an alternate manuscript reading.

the father of the speech,[134] and make him desist from such speeches; turn him to philosophy, just as his brother Polemarchus has turned, so that his lover here may also no longer waver ambiguously, as now, but conduct his life simply in reference to Love with philosophic speeches.

PHAE.: I join in prayer with you, Socrates, that these things come to
257c be, if indeed these things are better for us. And I have been wondering for a long time at your speech—how much more beautiful you have made it than the earlier one. So that I shrink in hesitation, lest Lysias should appear pretty low to me, if he should then actually wish to stretch out another speech to compete with it. For indeed, wondrous man, a certain one of the statesmen[135] was lately reviling him and reproaching him for this very thing, and throughout the whole reviling he called him a speechwriter.[136] So then perhaps from a love of honor he would hold back from writing for us.

SOC.: You are stating, young man, a ridiculous opinion, and you are
257d quite missing the mark in much about your comrade, if you consider him someone thus frightened at every noise. And perhaps you actually think that the one railing at him said what he was saying in reproach.

PHAE.: He appeared so, Socrates. And you yourself know too, along with me, that those who have power to do what's greatest and are most august in the cities are ashamed to write speeches and to leave behind writings of their own, fearing the reputation in later time, lest they be called sophists.

SOC.: A sweet bend, Phaedrus, has escaped your notice—so called
257e from the great bend of the Nile.[137] And besides the bend, it has escaped your notice that those of the statesmen who intend what's greatest in their thinking most love speech writing and leaving writings behind; seeing that, whenever they write some speech, they so cherish those who approve it that they add in writing, at the first line, those who give them their approval on each occasion.

134. Compare *Symposium* 177d, where Phaedrus is called "father of the speech" and 242a–b.

135. See second note at 248d.

136. As a reproach, speechwriter (*logographos*) meant someone who made money by writing speeches for others to deliver, as the scholiast comments. Socrates, of course, takes the term in a very broad literal meaning in what follows.

137. This obscure reference to some proverb evokes, perhaps, the use of euphemism or some such trope. The explanation involving the Nile may well have intruded into the text from some grammarian's comment.

PHAE.: How do you mean this? For I do not understand.

258a SOC.: Don't you understand that at the beginning of the political man's writing, the one who approves it has been written first?

PHAE.: How so?

SOC.: "It seemed good," I suppose he says, "to the council" or "to the people" or to both; and "so-and-so said," the writer naming himself very solemnly and extolling himself; and then he says on after this, displaying his own wisdom to those who approve, sometimes composing quite a long writing. Or does such a thing appear to you as anything other than a written speech?

258b PHAE.: It doesn't to me, at any rate.

SOC.: So then, if this speech stays in place, the composer[138] goes away from the theater rejoicing; but if it is wiped out[139] and he gets no allotment of speech writing and of being worthy of writing it down, he himself mourns and so do his comrades.[140]

PHAE.: Very much indeed.

SOC.: It's clear, then, that they act thus not as despising[141] the practice, but admiring it wonderfully.

PHAE.: Yes, quite so.

SOC.: What then? When he becomes an adequate rhetor or king, so as,

258c having gotten Lycurgus's or Solon's or Darius's power,[142] to become a deathless speechwriter in the city, doesn't he himself, while still living, then consider himself equal to a god, and those who come afterward believe these same things about him, when they behold his writings?

PHAE.: Very much indeed.

SOC. So then do you think that some one of such men, whoever he is and however ill minded toward Lysias, reproaches him for this very thing, that he writes?

PHAE.: It's not likely, then, from what you're saying; for it looks like he would be reproaching his own desire.

258d SOC.: This then is altogether clear, that the writing of speeches is not, in itself, shameful.

138. *Poiētēs:* maker, poet, composer; see second note to 236d.

139. That is, from the wooden tablets on which proposed laws were written.

140. "Comrades" (*hetairoi*) can have the political connotation of fellow partisans.

141. Or "having higher thoughts than."

142. Lycurgus was the mythical lawgiver of Sparta and claimed to be guided in his legislation by Apollo (see, for instance, *Laws* 624a); Solon, one of the seven wise men, reformed Athens's laws; Darius introduced important political and financial reforms for the Persian Empire's governance.

PHAE.: No, for why should it be?

SOC.: But that thing, I think, is indeed shameful: to speak and to write not beautifully, but shamefully and badly.

PHAE.: That's clear indeed.

SOC.: What then is the manner of writing beautifully and not? Do we have some need, Phaedrus, to examine Lysias about these things, and anyone else who has ever written or will ever write, whether a political or a private written composition, in meter as a poet or without meter as a private man?

258e PHAE.: Are you asking if we have a need? For the sake of what, then, would someone live, if I may say so, but for the sake of such pleasures? Not, I suppose, for the sake of those that one must feel pain beforehand or else not feel pleasure, which is the case for nearly all pleasures involving the body; wherefore, and justly so, they have been called slavish.

SOC. Indeed, we have leisure, as it seems. And at the same time the cicadas, singing and conversing with each other as they do in the
259a stifling heat above our heads, seem to me to look down on us too. If, then, they should see the two of us too, just as the many, not conversing at high noon but dozing and bewitched by them through idleness of thought, they would justly laugh at us, thinking that some slaves had come to their little resting place just like little sheep to sleep at high noon by the spring. But if they see us conversing and
259b sailing by them, as if by Sirens,[143] unbewitched, perhaps in admiration they might give the gift of honor that they have from gods to give to human beings.

PHAE.: What is this that they have? For I happen, as it seems, never to have heard of it.

SOC.: But it is surely not fitting for a man who loves music[144] not to have heard of such things. It is said that once upon a time these were human beings, before the Muses came to be; and then, when the Muses came to be and song was revealed, certain of the men of that
259c time were so astounded by pleasure that, in singing, they lost all care for food and drink, and brought their own lives to an end without noticing it. After that the race of cicadas grew from them, having got-

143. These were mythical beings, half-woman and half-bird, whose beautiful singing captivated sailors and led them to crash their boats on the rocks. The most famous account of them is in Homer's *Odyssey*, book 12.

144. *Philomousos:* lover of the Muses or of music (in the broadest sense).

ten this gift of honor from the Muses, to need no nourishment when born but straightaway, without food and without drink, to sing, until they end their lives, and after that to go by the Muses and report who of those here honors which one of them. So then, by reporting
259d to Terpsichore those who have honored her in dance troupes, they make them more favored with her friendship; and to Erato, those in erotic matters; and to the others likewise according to the form of each one's honor. To the eldest, Calliope, and to the one after her, Urania, they announce those who spend their time in philosophy and so honor the music of those two, who, most of all the Muses, are concerned with the heavens and with both divine and human speeches, and send forth the most beautiful voice.[145] So then, for the sake of many things, we must talk about something and not sleep in the high noon.

PHAE.: Yes indeed, then, we must talk.

259e SOC.: So we must therefore examine what we just now set forward for ourselves to examine: in what way it is beautiful to speak and to write a speech, and in what way not.

PHAE.: That's clear.

SOC.: So then, for things that are going to be well and beautifully said, must not the speaker's thought already exist, with knowledge of the truth about the things that he is going to say?

PHAE.: About this matter, Socrates my friend, this is what I have
260a heard: there is not a necessity for one who is going to be a rhetor to learn the things that are in reality just but the things that seem so to the multitude who will give judgment, nor the things that are really good or beautiful but that will seem so. For persuading comes from these, but not from the truth.

SOC.: And the word must not be thrown away, Phaedrus, that wise ones say,[146] but we must examine whether they are not saying something. And so too, what was just now said must not be dismissed.

PHAE.: What you are saying is correct.

SOC.: Should we examine it as follows?

PHAE.: How?

260b SOC.: If I should be persuading you to acquire a horse so as to ward

145. The relation of the heavens, *ouranos,* to Urania is clear; Socrates also appropriates Calliope (the beautiful voiced), traditionally the Muse of epic poetry, for philosophy.

146. Partly quoting and partly adapting Nestor's words at *Iliad* 2.361: "And it will not be a word to be thrown away that I say."

off enemies, and we both should be ignorant of horses, but I should happen to know this much about you, that Phaedrus considers a horse to be that one of the tame animals that has the biggest ears—

PHAE.: It would be ridiculous, Socrates.

SOC.: Not yet. But when I should be seriously persuading you, having composed a speech of praise regarding the ass, naming it horse and saying how the creature is worth everything to have acquired both at home and on military service, useful to fight off of, and in ad-

260c dition able to carry equipment and beneficial in many other respects.

PHAE.: Then it would be altogether ridiculous.

SOC.: So then, isn't ridiculous and friendly superior to terribly clever and hostile?[147]

PHAE.: It appears so.

SOC.: So then, when the person skilled in rhetoric, ignoring good and bad, takes on a city that is in the same condition and persuades it, not composing praise concerning the shadow of an ass as of a horse but concerning bad as if good, and having carefully studied the multitude's opinions persuades it to do bad things instead of good ones,

260d what kind of fruit do you think, after this, the rhetorical art would harvest from what it has sown?

PHAE.: Not quite a proper one, at any rate.

SOC.: Now then, good man, have we reviled the art of speeches more boorishly than need be? She might perhaps say: "What in the world, wondrous men, are you babbling about? For I do not compel anyone who ignores the truth to learn to speak; but—to give some counsel of mine—when he has acquired that, thus let him take me up. Now then, what I am saying is this big thing: that without me, he who knows the things that really are will not at all be able to persuade by art."

260e PHAE.: Will she then not be stating just things, when she says these things?

SOC.: I say yes, if, at any rate, the speeches coming at her bear witness that she is an art. For I seem to hear, as it were, certain speeches coming forward and bearing solemn witness that she lies and is not an art but an artless routine.[148] For a genuine art of speaking without grasping the truth, says the Lacedaemonian, neither is nor will ever come into being later.

147. "Superior" translates *kreittōn*, which I have usually rendered "stronger." See note at 238e.

148. As Socrates argues in the *Gorgias* at 463a–b and 465a.

261a PHAE.: These speeches, Socrates, are needed. Come then—lead them aside and scrutinize what they are saying and how!

SOC.: Come forward then, nobly born creatures, and persuade Phaedrus, endowed with beautiful children,[149] that if he does not adequately philosophize, he will also never be adequate at all to speak about anything. And let Phaedrus then answer!

PHAE.: Ask!

SOC.: Well then, would not the rhetorical art taken as a whole be a certain leading of the soul through speeches, not only in law courts and whatever other public gatherings, but also in private ones, the same con-

261b cerning both small and great things, and no less honored, with a view to what's correct at least, when it arises concerning serious than concerning paltry matters? Or in what way have you heard these things?

PHAE.: Not at all like this, by Zeus! But speaking and writing by art most of all, I suppose, deal with judicial judgments, and speaking also deals with speech in popular assemblies. I have not heard anything further.

SOC.: But have you then heard only of Nestor's and Odysseus's arts regarding speeches, which those two composed in writing while having leisure in Troy, but have you not heard of those of Palamedes?[150]

261c PHAE: Indeed, by Zeus, I have not even heard of Nestor's, unless you are fabricating a certain Nestor as Gorgias, or perhaps Odysseus as Thrasymachus and Theodorus.[151]

SOC.: Perhaps. But let's let these go. Now you speak: What do opposed parties in a suit do in law courts? Don't they speak in opposition? Or what shall we say?

PHAE.: This very thing.

SOC.: About the just and the unjust?

PHAE.: Yes.

SOC.: So then, does he who does this with art make the same thing ap-

261d pear to the same people sometimes just, and when he wishes, unjust?

149. This epithet perhaps refers back to Phaedrus as the cause of many speeches (242b).

150. Homer characterizes Nestor by his age, wise counsel, and length of speech; Odysseus by his sharp intelligence and impressiveness as a speaker. Palamedes is most inventive, as De Vries puts it.

151. The long-lived Gorgias of Leontini was one of the most famous teachers of rhetoric, whose name provides the title of Plato's longest dialogue on rhetoric. Of Theodorus of Byzantium little is known beyond his having written a handbook on rhetoric, probably around 400 B.C.; Aristotle mentions him four times in the *Rhetoric*. On Thrasymachus see the note at 267d.

PHAE.: Yes; and so?

SOC.: And in speech in public assemblies, does he make the same things seem to the city sometimes good, and then in turn the opposite?

PHAE.: Just so.

SOC.: Now then, don't we know that the Eleatic Palamedes[152] speaks with art, so that to those who hear him the same things appear like and unlike, one and many, and again remaining still and carried along?

PHAE.: Very much so.

SOC.: Speaking in opposition, therefore, concerns not only law courts
261e and speech in public assemblies but, as seems likely, there would be some one and the same art (if indeed it exists) concerned with all things said, by which someone will be able to liken everything to everything (of the things able to be likened and by those means by which it can be done)[153] and, when someone else likens and conceals it, to bring it to light.

PHAE.: Just how do you mean such a thing?

SOC.: In my opinion it will appear to those seeking in the following way. Does deception arise rather in things differing much or little?

262a PHAE.: In things differing little.

SOC.: Well then, surely in passing over by little steps you will go toward the opposite without being noticed more than by big steps.

PHAE.: Indeed, how could that not be?

SOC.: He who is going to deceive another, and not be deceived himself, must therefore precisely distinguish the likeness and unlikeness of beings.

PHAE.: It is indeed a necessity.

SOC.: So then, will he who ignores the truth of each thing be able to distinguish the small or great likeness, of the thing that he ignores, in other things?

262b PHAE.: Impossible.

SOC.: So therefore, for those who form opinions contrary to the beings and are deceived, it's clear that this experience slipped in through certain likenesses.

PHAE.: This is indeed how it arises.

152. Most likely Zeno, who, setting forth from the thought of Parmenides of Elea, developed famous paradoxes by which both opposites were affirmed (see for instance *Parmenides* 127e).

153. The second parenthetical clause could also mean "and for those for whom it can be done."

SOC.: Is it then possible that he will be artful in causing another to pass over by small steps through likenesses, leading in each case away from the being toward the opposite (or to escape this himself), unless he has gained thorough acquaintance with what each of the beings is?

PHAE.: No, never.

262c SOC.: Therefore, comrade, he who does not know the truth but has hunted opinions will provide for himself some ridiculous art of speeches, as seems likely, and indeed an artless one.

PHAE.: It may be.

SOC.: Do you wish, then, to look a bit at what we assert to be artless and artful, in Lysias's speech that you're carrying and in the things we said?

PHAE.: Yes, most of all things, I suppose, since now at any rate we are speaking sort of nakedly, not having adequate patterns.

SOC.: And indeed by some chance at least, as it seems, the two
262d speeches that have been spoken provide a certain pattern, of how someone who knows what is true would play a joke in speeches and lead the listeners astray. And I, at least, Phaedrus, hold the gods of this place to be the cause. Perhaps, too, the Muses' prophets, the singers overhead, may have inspired this gift of honor into us. For to be sure I, at least, have not any share in some art of speaking.

PHAE.: Let it be as you say; only make clear what you are asserting.

SOC.: Come then, read me again the beginning of Lysias's speech.

262e PHAE.: "You know about my affairs, and you have heard what, these things having come to be, I believe to be advantageous for us. And I deem it fitting to be spared the misfortune of not getting what I ask for on this account, that I do not happen to be in love with you. For those people then repent . . ."

SOC.: Stop. Now then we must say in what this errs and what it does that is artless, mustn't we?

263a PHAE.: Yes.

SOC.: Well then, is not something of the following sort clear to everyone, that concerning some of such things we tend to be of one mind, but concerning some we are inclined to faction?

PHAE.: I seem to understand what you're saying, but state it still more distinctly.

SOC.: When someone says the name of iron or silver, do we not all have the same thing in mind?

PHAE.: Yes, very much so.

SOC.: What then of just or good? Are not different people carried in different directions, and do we not part ways with each other and even with ourselves?

PHAE.: Yes, absolutely.

263b SOC.: In the ones, then, we sound in harmony; in the others, not.

PHAE.: That's so.

SOC.: On which side, then, are we more easily deceived, and in which things does rhetoric have greater power?

PHAE.: It's clearly in those things in which we are wandering.

SOC.: So then, he who is to go after the rhetorical art must first divide up these things in a systematic way,[154] and have grasped some characteristic of each form: that in which it's necessary that the multitude wander, and that in which not.

263c PHAE.: He who has grasped this, Socrates, would then at any rate have understood fully a beautiful form.

SOC.: Next, I think, as he comes near each thing, he is not unaware but perceives keenly, concerning the thing that he is going to speak about, to which family it happens to belong.

PHAE.: Yes, and so?

SOC.: What then? Should we assert that love belongs to the disputable things or to the not-disputable?

PHAE.: The disputable ones, doubtless. Or do you think that otherwise it would be possible for you to say what you have just now said about it, both that it is a harm to the beloved and the lover, and again that it happens to be the greatest of goods?

263d SOC.: What you're saying is very good. But tell me this too—for I do not altogether remember, on account of the divine possession—whether I defined love in beginning the speech.

PHAE.: Yes, by Zeus, with a vehemence beyond conception!

SOC.: Oh my! How much more artful do you say the nymphs, daughters of Achelous, and Pan the son of Hermes[155] are than Lysias the son of Cephalus as regards speeches! Or am I saying nothing, and did Lysias too, in beginning the erotic speech, compel us to assume Love

263e to be that certain one of the beings that he himself wished, and, having put things in order in relation to this, did he then proceed through the whole later speech? Do you wish that we read its beginning again?

154. Literally, with a road or path (*hodos*, whence *methodos* and our "method" are derived).

155. In *Cratylus* 408b–d Socrates emphasizes Pan's double nature—rough and goatlike below, smooth and human above—and his connection to speech.

PHAE.: If that seems good to you, at any rate. But what you are seeking is not there.

SOC.: Speak, so that I hear that man himself.

PHAE.: "You know about my affairs, and you have heard what, these things having come to be, I believe to be advantageous for us. And I
264a deem it fitting to be spared the misfortune of not getting what I ask for on this account, that I do not happen to be in love with you. For those people, when they have ceased from desire, repent the benefactions they have conferred."

SOC.: Surely this man, at least, seems to be far from doing what we are seeking; he endeavors to swim back again through the speech, on his back, not at all from the beginning but from the end, and begins from the things that the lover would say to the boyfriend when he has already ceased. Or have I said nothing, Phaedrus, dear head?

264b PHAE.: It is indeed, Socrates, an end, that he is making the speech about.

SOC.: And what about the other things? Doesn't he seem to have thrown the things in the speech with an indiscriminate outpouring? Or does what is said second appear to need to have been placed second out of some necessity, or any other of the things said? For it seemed to me, as to one who knows nothing, that whatever came forward to the writer was stated, not ignobly. Do you know some necessity of speech writing[156] by which that man thus set down these things in a row next to each other?

PHAE.: You are a fine one, if you consider me to be capable of thus dis-
264c tinctly seeing through that man's productions.

SOC.: But I think you would assert this, at any rate: that every speech, just like an animal, must be put together to have a certain body of its own, so as to be neither headless nor footless but to have middle parts and end parts, written suitably to each other and to the whole.

PHAE.: How could one deny it?

SOC.: So then examine your comrade's speech as to whether it is in this condition or otherwise, and you will find it no different from the epigram that some say was inscribed for Midas the Phrygian.

264d PHAE.: What sort of thing is this, and what happened to it?

SOC.: This is it:

I am a bronze maiden, and I lie on Midas's tomb.
As long as water flows and great fruit trees bloom,

156. Or "logographic necessity."

Remaining here on this much-lamented grave,
I announce to passersby that Midas is buried here.

264e That it makes no difference that some line of it is said first or last, you are doubtless taking note, I should think.

PHAE.: You are mocking our speech, Socrates.

SOC.: Well then, let's let this go, so that you won't be grieved—yet in my opinion it has many patterns, by looking toward which one might be benefited, by endeavoring not altogether to imitate them—and let us go on to the other speeches. For there was something in them, in my opinion, proper to see for those wishing to investigate concerning speeches.

265a PHAE.: What sort of thing, now, are you talking about?

SOC.: The two were opposites, I suppose. For one was saying that one must gratify the lover; the other, the nonlover.

PHAE.: And very manfully, too.

SOC.: I thought you were about to say what is true: madly. This of course is the very thing that I was seeking. For we asserted that love is a certain madness. Didn't we?

PHAE.: Yes.

SOC.: And of madness, then, there are two forms: one arising from human sicknesses, the other arising from a complete change, of divine origin, away from accustomed legal usages.

265b PHAE.: Absolutely.

SOC.: From the divine, we distinguished four parts belonging to four gods, positing prophetic inspiration belonging to Apollo, that of mystical initiation to Dionysus, poetic in turn to the Muses, and the fourth to Aphrodite and Eros; and we asserted that erotic madness is best. And in I don't know what way, we made a likeness of the erotic experience, maybe attaining some truth, and perhaps elsewhere being led astray, and so, mixing together a speech that was not alto-

265c gether untrustworthy, we played in measured manner and in words of good omen with a certain mythical hymn and, Phaedrus, with your and my master—Eros, the overseer of beautiful boys.

PHAE.: And for me, at any rate, not at all unpleasantly to hear.

SOC.: So then, from this very place let us take up the following: how the speech was able to pass over from blaming to praising.

PHAE.: Just what, then, do you mean by this?

SOC.: The other things, it appears to me, were played with, really, in play; but these certain two forms were stated by chance, and if some-

265d one should be able to grasp their power by art, it would not be ungraceful.

PHAE.: What are they?

SOC.: For him whose sight comprehends things dispersed in many places to lead them into one *idea*, so that by defining each thing, he makes clear what, on each occasion, he wishes to teach about. Just as the things said just now about love—what it is when defined—whether they were said well or badly, the speech was able through these things to say that which is distinct, at any rate, and itself in agreement with itself.

PHAE.: And what then do you say the other form is, Socrates?

265e SOC.: To be able, contrariwise, to cut apart by forms, according to where the joints have naturally grown, and not to endeavor to shatter any part, in the manner of a bad butcher. But just as the two speeches, a little while ago, took the thought's folly as some one

266a form in common, just as from one body the parts have naturally grown double and of the same name (some called left, others right), so too the business of derangement, as the two speeches consider it one natural form in us, the one speech cut the part on the left, and cutting this further, did not leave off before it discovered among them a certain left-handed love, so named, which it reviled very much in accord with justice; the other speech, leading us toward the parts of madness on the right side, discovering something with the same name as that, a certain love that was in turn divine and,

266b holding it out before us, praised it as the cause of the greatest goods for us.

PHAE.: What you are saying is very true.

SOC.: And I myself, for one, Phaedrus, am a lover of these dividings apart and bringings together, so that I may be capable of speaking and thinking. And if I consider someone else to have the power to see the things that have naturally grown into one and toward many, I pursue this man "behind after his footstep, as if a god's."[157] Furthermore, those who are able to do this—whether I address them cor-

266c rectly or not, god knows, but however that may be, so far I call them

157. These words recall a half verse of Homer, "he went after the footsteps of the god" (*Odyssey* 2.406, 3.30, 5.193, 7.38; in these four passages the god referred to is a goddess—thrice Athena, once Calypso). An almost identical adverb meaning "behind" occurs with this verb for pursuing in *Iliad* 22.157, referring to Achilles' pursuit of Hector. (The Homeric passages are cited by De Vries, p. 218).

dialectical.[158] Tell us what we must call them, having learned these things now from you and Lysias.[159] Or is this that thing, the art of speeches, by using which Thrasymachus and the others have themselves become wise at speaking and make others such, whoever are willing to give them gifts, as if to kings?

PHAE.: The men are kingly, but surely not knowers of the things you are asking about. But in my opinion you call this form correctly, calling it dialectical; but the rhetorical, in my opinion, is still escaping us.

266d SOC.: What are you saying? Would there perhaps be some beautiful thing left out of these that is nonetheless grasped by art? It must not at all be dishonored by you and me; rather, what indeed it is, the remaining part of rhetoric, must be stated.

PHAE.: Very many things indeed, I suppose, Socrates, are in the books that have been written about the art of speeches.

SOC.: You reminded me beautifully, too. That a speech's preface, I think, must be said first at the beginning; these are the things you are talking about—aren't they—the subtle refinements of the art.

266e PHAE.: Yes.

SOC.: Second, then, must come some sort of narrative and testimonies for it; third, proofs; fourth, probabilities. And the man of Byzantium, the best cunning fashioner of speech, speaks, I think, of confirmation and additional confirmation.

PHAE.: Do you mean the fine Theodorus?

267a SOC.: Yes, and so? Also that one must compose refutation—yes, and sur-refutation—in accusation and in defense speech. Shall we not lead the most beautiful Evenus of Paros[160] into the middle? He first discovered allusion and incidental praise, and they say that he spoke incidental blame in meter for the sake of memory, for the man is wise. Shall we let Tisias[161] and Gorgias sleep, who say that probable things are to be valued rather than true ones, and again they make small things appear great and great things small through the might of

267b speech, and novel things in an ancient way and opposite things with

158. Or "skilled at dialectic." *Dialektikos* could come from *dialegō*, "to pick out" or *dialegesthai*, "to talk through" or "to converse." Perhaps some wordplay on Zeus (*Dia* in the accusative case; see 252e and note there) is suggested: dialectic as choosing Zeus—or speaking like Zeus.

159. So De Vries and Hackforth understand the sentence; some others take it to mean: "Tell us what one must call those who have learned these things now from you and Lysias."

160. He also wrote poetry and taught the young for a modest fee (*Apology* 20b).

161. A Sicilian rhetorician, one of the earliest teachers of rhetoric (especially forensic).

novelty, and they have invented conciseness of speeches and boundless lengths concerning all things? Hearing these things from me once upon a time, Prodicus[162] laughed and asserted that he alone had discovered the art of speeches as they need to be: for they need to be neither long nor short but of due measure.

PHAE.: Most wise things, doubtless, Prodicus.

SOC.: And shall we not speak of Hippias? For I think that the foreigner from Elis would also vote with him.[163]

PHAE.: Indeed, and why not?

SOC.: And what, again, are we to declare about Polus's musical as-
267c pects of speeches—such as twofold speaking, speaking in maxims, speaking through likenesses—and of Licymnian names which he gave to that man[164] for the making of good diction.

PHAE.: Were not some such things, Socrates, Protagorean?[165]

SOC.: A certain correct diction, my boy, and many other things—beautiful ones too. And the Chalcedonian man's strength appears to me to have gained, by art, mastery of speeches that are dragged on, piteously wailing over old age and poverty; and at the same time the man has become terribly clever in turn at angering the many and
267d again, when they have been angered, at beguiling them by singing incantations, as he said; and he's strongest both at slandering and at dispelling slanders from whatever source.[166] And then it looks like the end of speeches has been agreed on by all in common, to which some put the name recapitulation and others something else.

PHAE.: Are you talking about reminding the listeners, concerning the things said, of each thing in summary, at the end?

SOC.: These are the things I am talking about—and if you have anything else to say concerning the art of speeches. . . .

PHAE.: Small things, doubtless, and not worth saying.

162. The Sophist Prodicus of Ceos, whose concern with the precise use of terms is often mentioned by Socrates, for example in the *Laches* at 197d; he is a participant in the *Protagoras*.

163. That is, with Prodicus. The Sophist Hippias of Elis claimed a wide range of expertise in various sciences; he is vividly depicted in the *Hippias Major* and *Hippias Minor*.

164. Viz. that Licymnius gave to Polus. Polus, of course, is a pupil of Gorgias best known for his role in the *Gorgias*. Aristotle mentions Licymnius as a poet as well as rhetorician in the *Rhetoric* and criticizes his making laughably excessive distinctions.

165. Protagoras, perhaps the most famous of the Sophists, has, like Gorgias and Hippias, a Platonic dialogue named after him.

166. The Chalcedonian man is Thrasymachus, already named by Phaedrus at 261c and by Socrates at 266c, and again at 269d and 271a. He appears to have been an important theorist of rhetoric, and he plays a major role in the *Republic*.

268a SOC.: Then let's let the small things go; let us rather see these things held up to bright light—what power of art they have, and when.
PHAE.: Very forceful power too, Socrates, surely in assemblies of the multitude, at any rate.
SOC.: Indeed they have. But, demonic one, you too see whether their warp appears to you also, as to me, divided.
PHAE.: Only show.
SOC.: Tell me then. If someone came before your comrade Eryximachus or his father Acumenus and said, "I know how to apply to bodies certain things such as heating, if I wish, and cooling, and if it
268b seems good to me, making them vomit, and if in turn it seems good, making them excrete down below, and very many other such things. And knowing these things, I deem myself worthy to be a doctor and to make such any other man to whom I transmit the knowledge of these things."—What do you think they would say, having heard this?
PHAE.: What else, then, but to ask if they know in addition to whom they must do each of these things and when and for how long?
SOC.: So if he should say, "Not at all; but I deem that, having learned
268c these things from me, he'll be worthy and able to do the things that you're asking," then?
PHAE.: I think they'd say that the human being is mad; and having heard things from a book someplace or having happened upon some little drugs, he thinks he has become a doctor, while understanding nothing of the art.
SOC.: What if, in turn, someone came before Sophocles or Euripides and said that he knows how to make exceedingly long utterances about a small matter and quite small ones about a great matter, and pitiable ones whenever he wishes, and in turn the opposite, fearful
268d and threatening ones, and whatever other things of that sort, and that in teaching these things he thinks he transmits the making of tragedy?
PHAE.: These men too, I think, Socrates, would laugh at it if someone thinks tragedy is anything other than the composition of these things put together suitably to each other and to the whole.
SOC.: They would not, I think, revile him boorishly, at any rate. But just as a musical person, meeting with a man who thought he was skilled in harmony on the ground that he happened to know how he
268e could make the highest-pitched and the deepest tones, would not

savagely say, "O wretch, your brain is deranged,"[167] but, since he's musical, would say more gently, "O best of men, it is necessary that one who is going to be skilled in harmony know these things too; but nothing prevents one who is in your condition from not knowing even a small bit of harmony; for you know the matters of knowledge necessary prior to harmony, but not the matters of harmonics."

PHAE.: Very correct, to be sure.

269a SOC.: So then, Sophocles too would say the man was displaying to them things prior to tragedy but not matters of tragedy; and Acumenus would say, things prior to medicine but not medical matters.

PHAE.: Just so, absolutely.

SOC.: What then do we think honey-voiced Adrastus or likewise Pericles would say, if they heard the all-beautiful devices of art that we were going through just now—brief speech and speaking through likenesses and whatever other things we went through and said
269b should be examined in bright light? Would they from boorishness, just as you and I, harshly say some uneducated utterance against those who wrote and taught these things as a rhetorical art, or, since they are wiser than we, would they rebuke us too, saying, "Phaedrus and Socrates, one must not display harsh anger but extend sympathetic pardon, if certain people, not knowing how to discuss, proved unable to define what in the world rhetoric is; and from this experience, having the matters of knowledge necessary prior to the art, thought they had
269c discovered rhetoric, and, teaching others these things, they consider that rhetoric has been perfectly taught them, and that their students themselves must from themselves provide in the speeches for saying each of these things persuasively and putting the whole together, which is no great task."

PHAE.: But surely, Socrates, there is some risk, at least, that this business of the art which these men teach and write as rhetoric is something of that sort, and in my opinion what you've said is true. But
269d how and from where might someone have the power to provide the art of what is really rhetorical and persuasive?

SOC.: Having the power, Phaedrus, so as to become a perfect competitor, is likely—and probably necessary too—to be acquired just as the other things are. If it falls to you to be by nature rhetorical, you will be a rhetor of high repute when you have acquired in addition knowledge and practice; but in whatever of these you fall short, in

167. The Greek expression means literally, "you have black bile."

this respect you will be imperfect. To the extent that an art of this exists, the approach in my opinion does not appear where Lysias and Thrasymachus proceed.

PHAE.: But where, then?

269e SOC.: It's likely, best of men, that Pericles may possibly have become the most perfect of all in rhetoric.[168]

PHAE.: Yes, and so?

SOC.: All of the arts that are great require in addition, concerning na-

270a ture, babbling and talk about what's above; for this element of high-mindedness and of bringing work altogether to perfection seems likely to enter in somehow from that source. And Pericles acquired this, in addition to being of a good nature. For falling in with Anaxagoras, who was such a one, and being filled with talk about what's above and attaining to the nature of mind and mindlessness,[169] concerning which Anaxagoras made his long speech, he dragged from that source toward the art of speeches what is applicable to it.

PHAE.: How do you mean this?

270b SOC.: The manner of the medical art is the same, doubtless, as that of the rhetorical.

PHAE.: How, then?

SOC.: In both one must divide up nature, that of the body in the one, of the soul in the other, if you are going, not only by routine and experience but by art, in the one case by applying drugs and nourishment to produce health and strength, and by applying with the other speeches and lawful practices to transmit whatever persuasion you wish and virtue.

PHAE.: This is likely, at any rate, Socrates.

270c SOC.: Now then, do you think one can thoroughly understand the nature of the soul, in a manner worthy of speech, without the nature of the whole?

PHAE.: If one must be persuaded in some respect by Hippocrates, of the Asclepiads,[170] it's not possible concerning the body either, without this approach.

SOC.: What he says, comrade, is indeed beautiful. But besides Hip-

168. The contrast with Socrates' critique of Pericles at *Gorgias* 515d–516d is striking.

169. Or "that which is not mind." Another manuscript reading conveys the pleonasm "the nature of mind and thought." See the mention of the pre-Socratic philosopher Anaxagoras at *Gorgias* 465d and the note there.

170. Doctors were frequently referred to as descendants of Asclepius, a hero mentioned in Homer's *Iliad* as having learned healing from the centaur Chiron. Hippocrates, a contemporary of Socrates, is surely the most famous doctor of Greek antiquity.

pocrates, one has to examine the argument to see if it sounds in harmony.

PHAE.: I agree.

SOC.: So then, concerning the business about nature, consider what in the world it is that Hippocrates and the true argument are saying. Must one not therefore think in the following way about the nature
270d of anything? First, to consider whether that thing is simple or of multiple form about which we wish to be artful ourselves and to be able to make someone else artful? And next, if it is simple, to consider its power: what power does it naturally have for acting in relation to what, or what power for suffering from what? And if it has many forms, having enumerated these, to see this very same thing regarding each that one saw regarding one: by what does it naturally do what or by what does it naturally suffer what from what?

PHAE.: It may be, Socrates.

SOC.: So the approach that lacks these things, then, would be just like
270e a blind man's way of walking. But surely he who goes after anything with art must not be likened either to a blind or to a deaf person; but it's clear that, if someone gives speeches by art to someone, he will show precisely the being of the nature of this thing to which he will apply speeches. And this, doubtless, will be soul.

PHAE.: Yes, and so?

271a SOC.: All his struggle, therefore, has been bent toward this; for he endeavors to produce persuasion in this. Doesn't he?

PHAE.: Yes.

SOC.: It's clear, then, that Thrasymachus, and whoever else seriously gives a rhetorical art, will first with all precision write, and make us see, the soul—whether it is naturally one and homogeneous or of multiple form, in the manner of the body's shape.[171] For we assert that this is what it is to point out nature.

PHAE.: Yes indeed, by all means.

SOC.: Second, then, what it naturally does to what or naturally suffers from what.

PHAE.: Yes, and so?

271b SOC.: And now, third, having arranged in order the classes of speeches and of soul and the things experienced by these, he will go through all the causes, fitting each together to each, and teaching through

171. Compare Socrates' questions about his own nature at 230a.

what cause one soul, being of such a sort, is of necessity persuaded by speeches of such a sort, and another remains unpersuaded.

PHAE.: If he were able in this way, that surely would be most beautiful, as it seems.

SOC.: No indeed then, my friend, if this or anything else is shown around or stated in some other way, it will never be said or written
271c with art. But the people now writing arts of speeches, which you have heard, are clever rogues[172] and keep it hidden, though they know about soul in an altogether beautiful way. So then, until they speak and write in this manner, let us not be persuaded by them that they write with art.

PHAE.: What is this manner?

SOC.: To say the words themselves doesn't fall easily into place. But I am willing to say how one must write, if one is to be as artful as the situation admits.

PHAE.: Say on, then.

SOC.: Since the power of speech happens to be a leading of the soul,
271d it is necessary that one who is going to be rhetorical know how many forms the soul has. Therefore there are so-and-so many, and of such and such a sort, from which such and such people come to be. And when these have been thus distinguished, then in turn there are so-and-so many forms of speeches, each of such a sort. Now then, people of such a sort are easily persuadable to such things by such speeches on account of this cause; people of another sort are difficult to persuade on account of these things. And then, having thought these things through competently and after that beholding them existing and being practiced in actions, one must be able to follow up
271e on the perception quickly; otherwise, he's as yet got nothing further than when formerly he attended to hear speeches. When not only can he say competently that such a person is persuaded by such speeches but also he's able to perceive distinctly that such a one is present and
272a point out to himself that this is the person and this is the nature that the speeches formerly dealt with, a nature that in deed is now in his presence, to which he must apply these speeches in this way for the sake of persuasion about these matters; and when, already having all these things, he grasps in addition the critical times when one must

172. *Panourgoi:* literally, "doers of everything," people who are ready to do anything, who stop at nothing.

speak and when one must refrain, and when, having learned what are the forms of all the speeches—of brief speaking and piteous appeal and terrible exacerbation—he recognizes the opportune time and the unfit time for these; for him, then, the art has been beautifully and perfectly accomplished, but before then, not. But when someone
272b falls short on any point whatever of these, whether he's speaking or teaching or writing, and yet asserts that he's speaking with art, he who is not persuaded prevails. "What now, then," the writer[173] will perhaps say, "Phaedrus and Socrates? Does it seem that one must accept an art of speeches spoken in this way, or in some other?"

PHAE.: It's doubtless impossible, Socrates, in any other way; and yet the work appears as no small matter, at any rate.

SOC.: What you say is true. For this reason, then, one must turn all the arguments around, up and down, inspecting them to see if some-
272c where some easier and briefer road to the art appears, so that one doesn't in vain go away on a long and rough road when it's possible to take a short and smooth one. But if somehow you have some assistance that you've heard of from Lysias or someone else, try to recall it and say.

PHAE.: As far as trying goes, I could; but right now and in this way, I cannot.

SOC.: So then, do you wish that I state a certain speech that I've heard from some of those concerned with these things?

PHAE.: Indeed—what is it?

SOC.: It is said, anyway, Phaedrus, that it's just to state even the wolf's position.

272d PHAE.: It's up to you, then. Do so.

SOC.: Well then, they say there's no need thus to make a solemn affair of these things nor to lead them up on high, bringing them round at great length. For all in all, they say—what we also said toward the beginning of this argument—that he who is going to be competently rhetorical has no need to have a share of truth about just or good deeds, or about human beings who are such by nature or by rearing. For altogether, no one has any care for truth about these things in law
272e courts, but for what is persuasive; and this is the probable, toward which he who is going to speak with art must turn. For next, one must also sometimes not say the things that were done, if they have

173. That is, the person who seriously gives a rhetorical art, of 271a.

not been done in a probable manner, but probable things, both in accusation and in defense speech; in all the ways one speaks, one must
273a pursue the probable, bidding many a farewell to the true. For when this comes into being throughout the whole speech, it provides the totality of the art.

PHAE.: You have gone through the very things, Socrates, that they say who lay claim to being artful concerning speeches. For I remember that earlier we touched briefly upon such a thing as this, and this seems to be a very great matter for those concerned with these things.

SOC.: But surely Tisias himself, at least, you have studied with precision. Well then, let Tisias tell us this too: whether he says the probable
273b is anything else than what conforms to the opinion of the multitude.[174]

PHAE.: Indeed, what else?

SOC.: Having found this, of course, a thing both wise and at the same time artful, as seems likely, he wrote that if some weak and courageous man beat up a strong and cowardly one, took away his cloak or something else, and was led into the law court, neither man of course must tell the truth. But the coward must deny that he was beaten up by the courageous man alone, and the other must contend
273c in refutation this, that the two were alone, and must make full use of that business of "How should I, who am such as this, make an attempt on such a one as that?" And that one, of course, will not speak of his own badness, but attempting to pass off some other lie, he'd probably give over a means of refuting somehow to his adversary at justice. And about other matters, of course, some such are the things said by art. Aren't they, Phaedrus?

PHAE.: Surely.

SOC.: Whew! Tisias—or whoever else in the world, indeed, it happens to be and from wherever he rejoices at being named—is likely to have discovered a terribly cleverly concealed art. But, comrade, shall we or shall we not say to this man . . . ?

273d PHAE.: Say what sort of thing?

SOC.: This: "We happen to have been saying for a long time, before you even passed by, Tisias, that in fact this probability happens to spring up in the many through likeness with the truth; and we recently went through likenesses, saying that everywhere it is he who knows the truth that knows most beautifully how to find them. So

174. More literally, "what seems (sc., good or true) to the multitude."

that if you are saying something else about the art of speeches, we would listen. But if not, we will be persuaded by the things we went through just now, that unless someone both enumerates the natures
273e of those who will hear and is able to distinguish the beings by forms and to comprehend with one *idea* in accordance with each one thing, he will never be artful about speeches to the extent that this is in the power of a human being. And he will never possess these things without much diligent study. The man of sound mind must not toil away at this for the sake of speaking and acting toward human beings, but for the sake of the power on the one hand to speak things gratifying to the gods and on the other to act in a gratifying fashion in everything, to the extent of his power. For surely, therefore, Tisias,
274a wiser ones than we say that the man who has intelligence must not carefully practice to gratify his fellow slaves, except as work on the side, but to gratify masters that are good and of good ancestry.[175] So that if the road is long, do not wonder; for one must go around on it for the sake of great things, not as in your opinion. These things too, however, as the argument asserts, if one is willing, will be most beautiful when they arise from those."[176]

PHAE.: It is said altogether beautifully in my opinion, Socrates, if indeed someone might be able.

SOC.: But surely for someone who attempts beautiful things, it is
274b beautiful even to suffer whatever it befalls him to suffer.

PHAE.: Yes indeed, very much so.

SOC.: So then, let this matter about art and artlessness of speeches suffice.

PHAE.: What then?

SOC.: Then the matter about the seemliness and unseemliness of writing—coming about in what way is it in a beautiful state, and in what way unseemly—is what remains. Isn't it?

PHAE.: Yes.

SOC.: Well then, do you know in what way, concerning speeches, you will most gratify god, whether acting or speaking?

PHAE.: Not at all. Do you?

175. See third note at 246a.

176. "These things" refer to the less than great things with which rhetoric is concerned in Tisias's opinion; "those" designate the approaches that Socrates calls for. I take this last sentence as concluding Socrates' imaginary address to Tisias and so punctuate; some others suggest that the comment is addressed directly to Phaedrus.

274c SOC.: I have something to say heard from men of former times; they themselves know the truth. And if we by ourselves should find this, would we then any longer have any care for human conjectural opinions?

PHAE.: What you asked is ridiculous. But say what you assert that you've heard.

SOC.: Well now, I heard how there was, near Naucratis in Egypt, a certain one of the old gods there, whose sacred bird is the one they call Ibis. And the name of this demon is Theuth. Now, this one first
274d found number and calculation, geometry and astronomy, and further, draughts and games of dice, and then, indeed, written letters. Now furthermore, at that time the king of all Egypt was Thamos, in the upper region's great city, which the Greeks call Egyptian Thebes; and they call the god Ammon.[177] Coming to him, Theuth displayed his arts and said they must be given out to the other Egyptians. He asked what benefit each art had, and as the other went through
274e them, he expressed blame on the one hand, praise on the other, for what in his opinion the other spoke beautifully or not beautifully. Many things, then, about each art in both senses, it is said, did Thamos reveal to Theuth, to go through which would make a long speech. And when it came to written letters, "This knowledge, king," said Theuth, "will make the Egyptians wiser and provide them with better memory; for it has been found as a drug for memory and wisdom." And the other said, "Most artful Theuth, one person is able to bring forth the things of art, another to judge what allotment of harm and of benefit they have for those who are going to use them.
275a And now you, being the father of written letters, have on account of goodwill said the opposite of what they can do. For this will provide forgetfulness in the souls of those who have learned it, through neglect of memory, seeing that, through trust in writing, they recollect from outside with alien markings, not reminding themselves from inside, by themselves. You have therefore found a drug not for memory, but for reminding. You are supplying the opinion of wisdom to the students, not truth. For you'll see that, having become hearers of much without teaching, they will seem to be sensible
275b judges in much, while being for the most part senseless, and hard to

177. Several editors accept one or another emendation, which yields "they call Thamos Ammon" or "they call the god Thamos Ammon."

be with, since they've become wise in their own opinion[178] instead of wise."

PHAE.: Socrates, you easily make Egyptian speeches—and speeches from whatever country you wish.

SOC.: Well, my friend, people in the sacred temple of Zeus at Dodona asserted that the first prophetic speeches came into being from an oak tree. Now, for the men of that time, seeing that they were not wise like you young men, it sufficed, because of their simplemind-
275c edness, to hear from an oak and a rock, if only they should say true things; for you, however, perhaps it makes a difference who the speaker is and from what country. For you do not look at only that thing: whether it is so or otherwise.

PHAE.: You have given a correct rebuke, and in my opinion the situation as regards written letters is as the Theban says.

SOC.: So then, he who supposes that he has left behind an art in writings, and he in turn who receives it with the thought that there will be something distinct and solid from writings, would be full of much simplemindedness and would fail to understand Ammon's prophecy,
275d supposing written speeches to be something more than reminding one who knows about the things that the writings are about.

PHAE.: Most correct.

SOC.: Indeed writing, Phaedrus, doubtless has this feature that is terribly clever, and truly resembles painting.[179] For the offspring of that art stand there as living beings, but if you ask them about something, they altogether keep a solemn silence. And likewise speeches do the same. For you would think that they speak with some understanding, but if you ask something about the things said, wishing to learn, it indicates some one thing only, and always the same. And when it's been once
275e written, every speech rolls around everywhere, alike by those who understand as in the same way by those for whom it is in no way fitting, and it does not know to whom it ought to speak and to whom not. And when it suffers offense and is reviled without justice it always needs its father's assistance. For by itself it cannot defend or assist itself.

PHAE.: These things you've said are also most correct.

276a SOC.: What then? Do we see another speech, the brother of this one,

178. *Doxosophoi*, probably coined by Plato, might also mean "wise in appearance" or "wise in (others') opinion."

179. *Zōgraphia*, painting or the art of painting, has the roots "alive/animals/life" and "writing."

and genuine—do we see both in what manner it comes into being and how much better and more powerful it naturally is than this one?

PHAE.: What is this one and how do you say it comes into being?

SOC.: The one that is written with knowledge in the soul of him who understands, with power to defend itself, and knowing to speak and to keep silence toward those it ought.

PHAE.: You are speaking of the speech of him who knows, a speech living and endowed with soul, of which the written speech might justly be said to be a certain image.

276b SOC.: Just so, absolutely. Then tell me this: would a farmer who has intelligence sow seeds, if he is concerned with them and wishes them to become fruitful, in the gardens of Adonis[180] in summertime and would he rejoice seeing them become beautiful in eight days, or would he do these things for the sake of play and festivity, when indeed he would do so at all? With seeds that he is serious about, using the art of farming, having sown them where it is fitting, would he be contented when the seeds he'd sown attained their end in the eighth month?

276c PHAE.: In this way, doubtless, Socrates, he would do the one set of things seriously and the others in the other way that you're saying.

SOC.: Shall we say that he who has sciences of just and beautiful and good things has less intelligence in regard to his own seeds than the farmer?

PHAE.: Least of all shall we say this.

SOC.: He will therefore not seriously write these things in black water, sowing through a reed pen with speeches that are powerless on the one hand to assist themselves with argument, powerless on the other to teach true things competently.

PHAE.: Certainly not, as it's likely, at least.

276d SOC.: No indeed. But he will sow the gardens in writings, as is likely, and write, when he writes, for the sake of play, storing a treasure of reminders for himself, when he comes into an old age of forgetfulness; and for everyone who is going after the same track, he'll be pleased to see the gardens naturally grow up tender. But when others engage in other kinds of play, watering themselves with drinking

180. Special flowerpots set out to celebrate the festival of Adonis, a beautiful youth after whose premature death Zeus decreed that Adonis should spend half the year on earth with Aphrodite and half the year in the underworld with Persephone. The cult evokes thoughts of death, rebirth, and harvest.

parties and other things that are brothers to these, then that man, as is likely, will pass his time playing with the things I'm speaking of instead of these.

276e PHAE.: You are speaking of altogether beautiful play as compared with ordinary play, Socrates—of him who is able to play in speeches, telling tales about justice and the other things you are speaking of.

SOC.: So it is, indeed, Phaedrus. But much more beautiful, I think, is the seriousness that comes into being about these things, when someone using the dialectical art, taking hold of a fitting soul, plants[181] and

277a sows with knowledge speeches that are competent to assist themselves and him who planted and are not barren but have seed, whence other speeches, naturally growing in other characters, are competent to pass this on, ever deathless, and make him who has it experience as much happiness as is possible for a human being.

PHAE.: What you're saying here is indeed still more beautiful.

SOC.: Now then, Phaedrus, these things having been agreed on, we are at the point we can judge those things.

PHAE.: What sort of things?

SOC.: Things that we wanted to see about and so have come to this point here, in order that we might closely examine both the reproach

277b against Lysias concerning the writing of speeches and the speeches themselves, which might be written by art and without art. So then, what is within the realm of art, and what is not, seems to me to have been made clear in due measure.

PHAE.: It seems so, at any rate. But remind me again how.

SOC.: Until someone knows the truth of each of the things that he speaks or writes about; and becomes able to define every thing in relation to the thing itself; and having defined it, knows how, next, to cut it in accordance with forms all the way to what is uncuttable; and, seeing clearly concerning the soul's nature in accordance with these

277c same things, discovering the form that fits together with each nature, in this way sets down and orders the speech, giving speeches of many colors and embracing all harmonic modes to a many-colored soul and simple ones to a simple soul—before this he will not be able to handle with art the class of speeches, to the extent that it naturally admits of it, either for teaching something or for persuading something, as the whole earlier argument has disclosed to us.

PHAE.: Absolutely, indeed, this is doubtless how it came to light.

181. *Phuteuō* can mean "beget" as well as "plant."

277d SOC.: And what in turn about its being beautiful or shameful to speak and to write speeches, and in what way, when it comes to be, it might be said with justice to be a matter of reproach or not? Haven't the things said a little earlier made it clear?

PHAE.: What sort of things?

SOC.: That if either Lysias or anyone else has ever written or will write, in private or in public, setting down laws, writing a political written composition, and then considering that some great solidity and clarity are in it—for someone writing in this fashion, there is matter of reproach, whether anyone says so or not.[182] For to be igno-
277e rant, both awake and in dreams, about things just and unjust, bad and good, does not in truth escape reproach aimed at it, even if the whole mob should praise it.

PHAE.: Indeed not, then.

SOC.: He, however, who considers that there is of necessity much playfulness in the written speech about each thing and that no speech has ever been written, in meter or without meter, that is worthy of great seriousness (nor spoken, in the way that recited[183] speeches are spoken, for the sake of persuasion, without examination
278a and teaching) but that in reality the best of them are a reminding of those who know; who considers that being clear and complete and worthy of seriousness is present only in things taught and said for the sake of learning and really written in the soul, concerning things just and beautiful and good; and that he ought to declare such speeches of his to be like genuine sons, first the speech in himself, if, having been found, it is present in him, and next if some offspring
278b and at the same time brothers of this one have naturally grown in other souls of others in accordance with their worth; and who lets the other speeches go and farewell—such a man as this, Phaedrus, is probably such as you and I might pray that I and you should become.

PHAE.: Absolutely, indeed, I for one wish and pray for the things you are saying.

SOC.: So then let's consider that we have now played in measured

182. That is, whether or not the reproach is stated. De Vries supports a possible alternative: whether or not someone (who writes) says so (sc., that he believes solidity and clarity to inhere in his writing).

183. The verb *rhapsōdeō* refers especially to reciters of poetry. Cf. Plato's *Ion* for Socrates' examination of a famous rhapsode, and consider Xenophon's *Symposium* 3.7, where Socrates explains the view that no tribe of men is sillier than the rhapsodes by asserting that they do not understand the deeper or covert meanings.

fashion with these matters about speeches.[184] And so you go declare to Lysias that we two went down to the nymphs' stream and sanc-
278c tuary[185] and heard speeches that enjoined us to speak to Lysias and anyone else who composes speeches, also to Homer and anyone else in turn who has composed bare poetry or poetry in song,[186] and third to Solon and whoever in political speeches has written compositions, naming them laws. If he has composed these things, knowing where the truth lies, and being able to assist, when he goes into refutative examination of the things that he has written about, and has the power, when he himself speaks, to show forth the written things as
278d slight—such a man must not be said to be named after these things, but named after those things that he has taken seriously.

PHAE.: What names, then, do you distribute to him?

SOC.: To call him *wise*, Phaedrus, to me at least seems to be a big thing and to be fitting for god only. But either *philosopher* or some such thing would fit him better and would be more harmonious.

PHAE.: And it would be nothing beside the mark.[187]

SOC.: So then, the one who does not have things more honored than those he has composed or written, turning them up and down over
278e time, pasting them on to each other and taking them away—will you in turn, doubtless with justice, address him as poet or writer of speeches or law writer?

PHAE.: Of course.

SOC.: Well then, declare these things to your comrade.

PHAE.: And what about you? What will you do? For one must not pass by your comrade either.

SOC.: Who is this?

PHAE.: The beautiful Isocrates. What will you report to him, Socrates? What shall we say that he is?

SOC.: Isocrates is still young, Phaedrus. But I am willing to say what
279a I prophesy about him.

184. The words *pepaisthō metriōs* ("... played in measured fashion") end Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*.

185. The word *mouseion* means "shrine of the Muses," "home of music," etc.; the same word in the plural was used at 267b in referring to Polus's work in rhetoric.

186. "Bare poetry" means without accompanying music, i.e., epic poetry; lyric poetry was accompanied with music, "in song" (*ōidei*).

187. Thus De Vries takes the sentence, comparing *Republic* 470b and *Theaetetus* 143c. Or perhaps it could mean "contrary to (his) manner." (Cf. in Thucydides 1.76, "we have done nothing contrary to the human manner.")

PHAE.: What sort of thing is it, then?

SOC.: He seems to me to be better in respect to the things of nature than the level of speeches in Lysias's circle[188] and further to have been mixed together with a more nobly born character. So that it would be nothing wondrous as his age advances if, concerning the same speeches that he now puts his hand to, he should excel by more than a man excels children those who have ever yet undertaken speeches, and still more so if these things do not suffice him but some more divine impulse should lead him toward greater things. For by nature,
279b my friend, a certain philosophy is present in the man's thought. So then these things, now, I proclaim from these gods here to Isocrates,[189] as my boyfriend; you proclaim the former things to Lysias, as yours.

PHAE.: This shall be so. But let's go, since indeed the stifling heat has become gentler.

SOC.: Is it fitting then that we proceed when we've prayed to these ones here?

PHAE.: Of course.

SOC.: Friend Pan and however many other gods are here, grant me to become beautiful in respect to the things within. And as to whatever things I have outside, grant that they be friendly to the things inside
279c me. May I believe the wise man to be rich. May I have as big a mass of gold as no one other than the moderate man of sound mind could bear or bring along.

Do we still need something else, Phaedrus? For I think I've prayed in a measured fashion.

PHAE.: And pray also for these things for me. For friends' things are in common.

SOC.: Let's go.

188. Following De Vries's suggestion; others take this periphrastic expression to mean simply "the level of Lysias's speeches."

189. Isocrates, a contemporary of Plato, founded a school—doubtless a rival to Plato's Academy—that taught rhetoric or, as Isocrates calls it, philosophy that guides speaking and political practice (see for example *Antidosis* 46–50). Many of Isocrates' speeches have been preserved.